Exploring the staff development needs of junior academic middle managers in a Faculty of Health and Social Care during organisational change: A Bourdieusian perspective.

Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of the University of Chester for the degree of Professional Doctorate in Professional Studies (Leadership and Management) by Jean Lindsay Evers

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Declaration by candidate

The material being presented for examination is my own work and has not been submitted for an award of this or another HEI except in minor particulars which are explicitly noted in the body of the thesis. Where research pertaining to the thesis was undertaken collaboratively, the nature and extent of my individual contribution has been made explicit.

Signed  **Jean Lindsay Evers**

Date 17th December 2019

Abstract

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Title: Exploring the staff development needs of junior academic middle managers in a Faculty of Health and Social Care during organisational change: A Bourdieusian perspective.

The aim of this study was to gain an in-depth understanding of the personal and professional staff development needs of junior academic middle managers in a Faculty of Health and Social Care during a period of change. The research was undertaken in the North West of England in a post-1992 University, following a reorganisation of the Faculty of Health and Social Care and introduction of new roles. The study adopted an action research methodology and a co-operative inquiry method, which consisted of a co-operative inquiry group of junior academic middle managers who were also co-researchers. The nature of co-operative inquiry is for co -researchers to engage in repeated cycles of reflection and action that generate changes to their professional practice. The study was conducted over a period of one year and during this time multiple data collection methods were utilised to triangulate the evidence.

The research findings identified that multiple identities caused conflict between professional and academic roles, negatively impacting on junior academic middle managers during periods of change. During transition, some participants reported difficulty in adapting to complex political reforms, which caused dissonance between their actual and perceived roles in the field. The junior academic middle managers reported that the safe and trusting environment of the co-operative inquiry group enhanced their confidence and enabled them to learn in action and acquire a reflexive approach when undertaking their roles in the newly structured organisation. The study contributes to the existing literature regarding role identity of professional academics in higher education and offers new insights into transition during complex organisational change.

Summary of Doctorate of Professional Studies Programme

This section demonstrates my progression and how my personal and professional identity has been influenced throughout this professional doctorate. This thesis is part of a professional doctorate programme and throughout each stage of the programme I have developed greater insight, understanding and knowledge of being an insider researcher, and how my professional identity influences my every-day-practice as an academic manager, professional and researcher. The thesis is the final assessed component of the programme and allows me to share this transformational learning and development.

The following modules have been successfully completed and were an essential element of this thesis:

IS7 508 Personal and Professional Review
IS7 010 Research Methods for Work Based Learning
IS7 011 Negotiated Experiential Learning
IS8 001 Practitioner Enquiry at Doctoral level
IS8 002 Minor Practitioner Research project.

Throughout my doctoral journey, I have gained confidence in my ability as a researcher. When I commenced the programme, I had not anticipated how much the doctoral journey would develop me as a practitioner, researcher and academic. I have found this progression both empowering and enabling, further enhancing my ability to critically reflect and synthesise my role as a professional practitioner in higher education (HE).

This thesis builds upon the knowledge gained from the final minor practitioner research (MPR) project which was a significant catalyst for this research study. The MPR project was a result of the accumulation of knowledge during my role at the Department of Health (DH), which was a six-month secondment. During this time, I applied my dual professional knowledge of Health Visiting (HV) and academia in a

new field of practice. The role was in relation to implementing a national change in HV education and practice policy (Department of Health, 2011a, 2011b), which required expertise in both arenas of professional knowledge, and was necessary for the development and implementation of new approaches to HV practice and HE.

My key responsibility during this secondment was embedding the Health Visitor Implementation Plan (HVIP) (Department of Health, 2011a) into practice. This role developed my capacity to analyse high level nationwide policies which would aid the transformation of the HV workforce at a strategic level (Department of Health, 2011b). A portfolio was produced during this role which authenticated my knowledge and understanding of my dual professional roles and the diverse 'fields' of professional practice across complex organisations.

As part of the doctoral journey and the MPR project I decided to keep a reflective journal to provide evidence of my learning and capture the trajectory of the role in the DH and my transformation throughout. The journal was part of a reflective process which enabled me to have a greater understanding of how national policy and changes in social policy can affect professional identities and impact upon roles in HE. Initially, the reflective journal captured my thoughts and feelings demonstrating insight into my personal research, leadership and management skills. However, the MPR project also ignited my interest in professional identity, organisational culture and how managers need to adapt at times of changing policies and organisational priorities. The reflective journal catalogued my personal and professional perspective documenting a transformation in my personal philosophy and enabled me to develop a greater insight of self, colleagues and organisational culture. This evidence demonstrates my enhanced self-awareness as a manager, academic and professional, and enabled me to develop higher levels of problem-solving and critical thinking.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express heartfelt thanks to my husband Derek and my daughter Natalie for their continuous support and believing in me throughout this journey. Also, to Buddy, my cockapoo who provided the required cuddles and long walks that have kept me focussed and sane during the writing up stages of this thesis.

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Finally, I would like to thank my colleagues who supported me in undertaking and contributed to this research study, giving their time and knowledge. I am particularly indebted to Dr Debbie Haydock, Deputy Head of Department, for our conversations about Pierre Bourdieu and altruistically protecting me from the 'wicked problems' related to work. This thesis would not have been completed without a great team of friends, colleagues and family.

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List of Abbreviations

AMM:	Academic Middle Manager
BIS:	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
Brexit:	Pending withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union following the 2016 referendum
CASP:	Critical Appraisal Skills Programme
CIG:	Co-operative Inquiry Group
CINAHL:	Cumulative Index of Nursing and Allied Health Literature
DH:	Department of Health
FHSC:	Faculty of Health and Social Care
FGN:	Focus Group Notes
FMG:	Faculty Management Group
GPhC:	General Pharmaceutical Council
HE:	Higher Education
HEI:	Higher Education Institute
HoD:	Head of Department
HCPC:	The Health and Care Professions Council
HV:	Health Visitor
HR:	Human Resources
HVIP:	Health Visitor Implementation Plan
JAMM:	Junior Academic Middle Manager
MPR:	Minor Research Practitioner
NHS:	National Health Service
NMC:	Nursing and Midwifery Council
NSS:	National Student Survey
OfS:	The Office for Students
PDR:	Professional Development Review
PRES:	Postgraduate Research Experience Survey
REF:	Research Excellence Framework
RJ:	Reflective Journal
TEF:	Teaching Excellence Framework
UCAS:	University and Colleges Admissions Service
UK:	United Kingdom

Chapter 1: Introduction to Thesis

This chapter presents the conception and motivation for this research study which is situated in the researcher's employing organisation. This study sought to gain an in-depth understanding of the complex role of junior academic middle managers in professional education using an action research methodology. A detailed account of how the aim and objectives were constructed is given within the context of my field of practice. As an insider researcher the concept of insider research is considered including my role of Head of Department (HoD). My personal doctoral journey as an insider researcher has unified different roles and multiple identities which will be shared throughout this thesis. In order to contextualise and make sense of the complexity of situated learning whilst undertaking research in my own organisation I have adopted Bourdieu's (1977) theory of practice to conceptualise and define the phenomena under investigation. Bourdieu's (1977) theory of practice acted as a valuable conceptual framework to explore research concepts and assumptions throughout the research process.

1.1 Identifying the practice problem

As HoD it was evident during my discussions and meetings with colleagues that a recent Faculty reconfiguration resulted in challenges and tensions for the junior academic middle managers. The evolving changes that were occurring in the Faculty of Health and Social care (FHSC) appear to cause role confusion and conflict. Some colleagues found the changes difficult to cope with and manage, and they sought additional informal group support from me as a senior colleague. During these informal meetings and reflective conversations, it became apparent there was a phenomenon occurring that we did not completely understand. After the initial informal meetings, I approached the group to consider undertaking a research study as I was undertaking a professional doctorate programme. In order to understand the new world order, we were operating in we searched the practice-based literature

and underpinning theory concerning organisational change management and support.

Following a review of the literature it was mutually agreed by the junior academic middle managers that a group environment may be beneficial to support the exploration of practice issues thereby empowering the junior academic middle managers to find the solutions and implement any necessary changes. The junior academic middle managers and I agreed they were best placed to undertake this research study, we therefore, considered which methodology would be appropriate to address the practice problems being experienced. Action research was deemed the most appropriate methodology to meet the needs of the group, in particular co-operative inquiry. Heron (1996) claims co-operative inquiry involves researchers as co-researchers and co-subjects thus promoting co-creation of their own reality. I was also keen for the research design to embrace the messiness of researching in our own organisation (McNiff, 2000).

1.1.1 Rationale for adopting the co-operative inquiry method

The rationale for choosing co-operative inquiry is that this method aims to increase people's involvement in the creation and application of knowledge about themselves and their social worlds (Heron, 1996). Co-operative inquiry reduces the distinction between the researcher and participants. This is achieved by creating an environment to support democratic process for the content and design of the research. I wanted to adopt the co-operative inquiry method, to aid empowerment of the junior academic middle managers in a person-centered participative inquiry. Co-operative inquiry breaks down the separation of the roles between researchers and the subjects and supports the self-generation of culture and transformation of practice (Heron, 1996; Reason & Heron, 1999).

Heron (1996, p.54) describes the four stages of co-operative inquiry as:

Stage one: a group of co-researchers meet to explore an agreed area for exploration. They agree the research focus, develop research propositions and undertake some action that will contribute to the exploration and decide the first action phase (*reflection and planning*).

Stage two: the co-researchers become co-subjects carrying out the first actions, learning the required processes and outcomes of their own, and others experiences. This is a time to notice subtle differences in generating ideas and importing conceptual frameworks to support transformative inquiry (*action*).

Stage three**:** this is the bedrock of the inquiry process, co-subjects become completely immersed and fully engaged with their experiences that may enable new awareness and insights (*action*).

Stage four: is the second reflection phase after a period in stages two and three the co-researchers reconsider their original research propositions and make sense of the data. This may lead to the next action phase thus reframing and posing new questions in the light of experience (*reflection*).

Throughout the course of the research project, the co-operative inquiry group (CIG) members debated the evolving practice issues and also reflected upon the use of co-operative inquiry as a method. Part of these discussions included how the evolving knowledge and experience could be understood. During one meeting discussions included how a conceptual framework can act as a lens through which to view phenomena and findings. The junior academic middle managers also considered that such a framework would enhance their critical thinking thereby aiding a more in-depth understanding of their social world. Initially the CIG considered using the lens of Lave and Wenger (1991) communities of practice as this was thought to be appropriate for this study. Lave and Wenger (1991) argue that learning occurs initially at the periphery of the community and competency increases through time, they argue that this acquisition of knowledge is through the process of social participation. As a CIG we explored the advantages and disadvantages of

communities of practice and it was considered that communities of practice appeared to exist in the FHSC. Further discussions took place regarding sociological, psychological and philosophical perspectives and it became apparent that CIG members wanted a conceptual framework that would challenge their thinking as co-researchers, enabling them to explore their social world. Following further debate, the CIG members mutually decided that Bourdieu's sociological lens would be advantageous as a conceptual framework for this study. It was considered that Bourdieu's thinking tools and theory of practice could facilitate the investigation of the practice problems being faced whilst providing a theoretical and sociological lens through which to view and make sense of the experiences of the group.

1.2 Conceptual framework

Bourdieu's (1977) theory of practice, which incorporates the key concepts of capital, habitus and field was consequently adopted as the conceptual framework to support both my doctoral journey and this thesis. Bourdieu (1930-2002) is a renowned French social theorist and anthropologist, much of his body of work focusses on education and pedagogy. His theory of practice is suggested by Maton (2012) to be a respected framework to explore and challenge understanding of the social world. Bourdieu's theory of practice offers an epistemological and methodological framework by which educational researchers can develop an in-depth understanding of how knowledge is developed and acquired (Grenfell & James, 1998).

Bourdieu (1977) uses the all-encompassing term capital to denote assets that can be exchanged across different social networks or fields. There are four main categories of capital - economic, cultural, social and symbolic - which can be used to gain position and power in a social field (Grenfell & James, 1998). Economic capital is thought of as the accumulation of wealth and assets such as investments, property and money (Moore, 2012). Social capital is referred to as the resources that have been accumulated over time by an individual when they have access to specific social networks such as professional, informal or familial networks. Cultural capital is the cultural knowledge and connections that the individual has, for example, knowing

how to behave or understanding 'the code' of a social field. Finally, symbolic capital is regarded as prestige or recognition given to an individual that signifies their value in a particular social field (Grenfell & James, 1998).

Habitus is conceptualised by Bourdieu as the structuring of an individual's past and present, which shapes the individual's practice in the field (Maton, 2012). Habitus works in conjunction with capital and is internally regulated (Bourdieu, 1977). Finally, field is conceptualised to be the space in the social world we inhabit as agents and function within (Thomson, 2012; Bourdieu, 1977). The field is often described as a series of interrelated and dynamic structures and institutions that evolve over time (Thomson, 2012).

1.3 Background

This thesis presents the key findings and significant learning that emerged during a research study situated within a FHSC located in a post-1992 University in the North West of England. The rationale for this study developed following a period of significant change occurring within my own organisation which made me reflect on my role as an insider researcher and how my own staff development needs were being met. In addition, I observed that during periods of organisational change academic staff often behaved differently and appeared to need additional support and reassurance. Following discussions with the Human Resources (HR) business partner who had responsibility for the FHSC staff, it became apparent that the organisational changes and policy reforms were negatively affecting some of the academic staff. I became interested in developing a research study that could increase understanding of this phenomenon and provide support to the staff in my organisation. I also wanted to facilitate learning-in-action and seek solutions.

This research study was conceptualised as a consequence of my experience of transitioning into HE from clinical practice and also following a promotion to a junior academic middle manager role in the case FHSC. Both experiences left me feeling isolated at times despite being formally supported by colleagues in the FHSC and HR

processes. I reflect upon this as a stressful and difficult time, where I often felt displaced and out of my depth, described succinctly by Zandy (1995) as imposter syndrome. Bourdieu (1984) considers the concept of hysteresis, whereby an individual's habitus or identity is dislocated as a result of conflict between habitus and field to result in a feeling of being a 'fish out of water' or 'out of control' (Grenfell, 2012). Hysteresis is heightened when an individual enters a new field of practice without the related accumulated capital; this affects the position of the individual within the field and can lead to feelings of isolation and powerlessness (Bourdieu, 1977).

I had naively thought the transition from practice to HE would be easy, that prior knowledge and experience would act as required capital serving me well in a new social field. However, the role, language and culture were completely different from my expectations. This corresponds with Bourdieu's concept of fields being unique areas with their own discrete rules (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Despite my unsettled transition into the role of Senior Lecturer, I made the decision to remain in HE, although the dual nature of the role was challenging at times. It rapidly became apparent that the accountability of being a professional in HE was an enormous responsibility, which required ongoing professional and personal development. These sentiments were echoed in a recent study investigating the difficulties nurses face during the transition from practice to academia (Logan, Gallimore, & Jordan, 2016).

As a practitioner, I did not fully understand the complexity of Higher Education Institutes (HEIs). Now, as a HoD and more recently as an insider researcher I have developed different perspectives and ideologies and understand the socio-economic and political environment from a situated learning theory perspective (Coghlan, 2013; Mercer, 2009). Bourdieu would consider this in terms of the accumulation of capital and resultant development of habitus, and this perspective will be explored throughout this thesis.

1.4 Setting the scene

The case University was one of the first purpose-built teacher training colleges in England. The School of Nursing and Midwifery, now located within the FHSC was established at the case University in 1993 following the directive that nurse training would transfer from the National Health Service (NHS) to university-based education (National Audit office, 2001; Zhang & Lathlean, 2014). This major change caused a shift in culture for nurse education (Thomas-Gregory, 2014). Government reforms can be seen to have transformed nurse education from a training apprenticeship model to a model of academic education within a HE environment (Zhang & Lathlean, 2014). Following these reforms, the FHSC became a multi-sited Faculty. At the time of this study, the FHSC consisted of two hospital-based sites and two University campuses. The programmes delivered within the FHSC were initially all pre-registration nursing and midwifery.

The FHSC currently delivers a range of professional programmes validated by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) and the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC). Professional regulation proffers opportunities and challenges for the University and the academics working within the FHSC. University regulations do not always fit with the governing approaches that the professional regulators require which leads to some derogation from University principles and regulations, such as increased module contact hours and programmes consisting of large practice-based content.

Figure 1 is a representation of the internal and external drivers and social policy reforms the junior academic middle managers operate within as members of the FHSC, and it illustrates the complexity of the field and the multi-dimensional roles of the junior academic middle managers.

Figure 1: Macro, Meso and Micro levels of Internal and external influences and drivers upon JAMMs

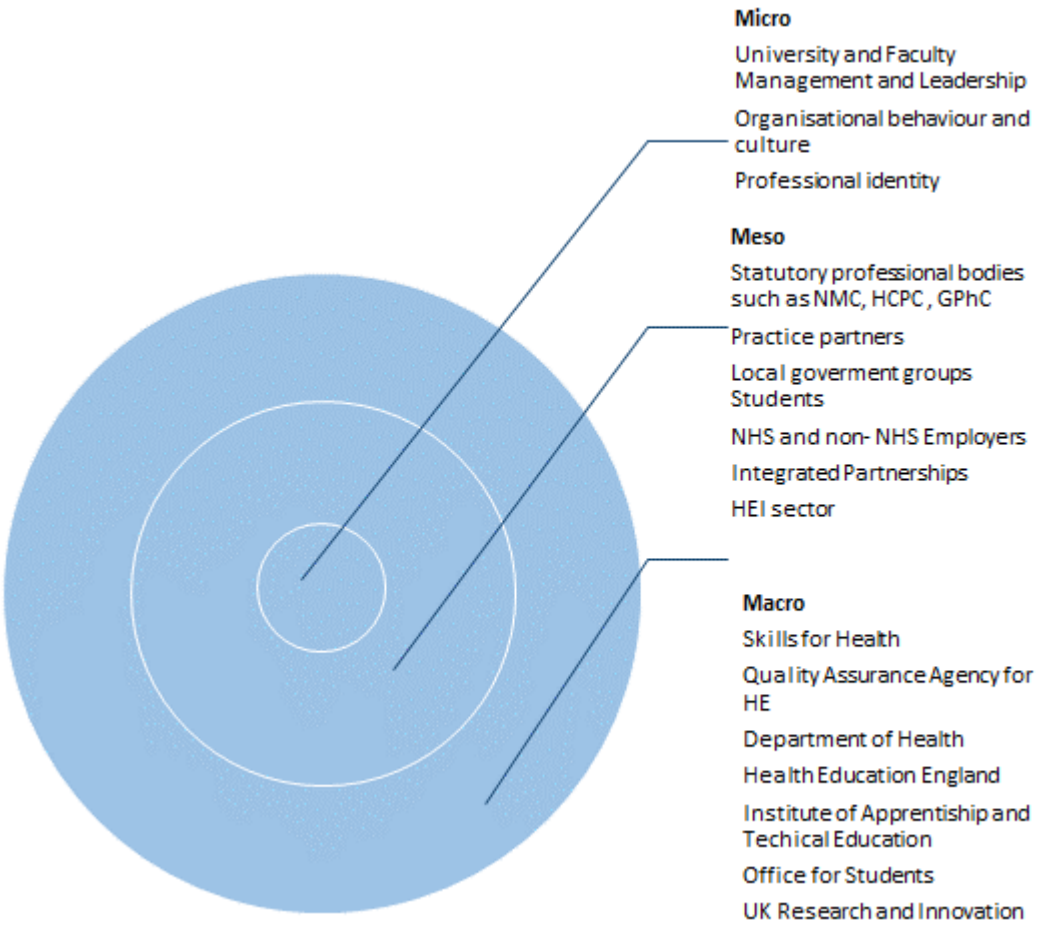


Figure 1 depicts the drivers from a macro, meso and micro perspective, to show the interdependencies, complexity and multiple systems of the organisational environment. The macro level is considered to be the contextual political, economic and policy drivers, whereas meso is viewed as the transactional level which includes regulatory bodies, clients and competitors (Cross & Carbery, 2016). The micro level is concerned with the dynamic and organisational behaviour of individuals and how teams work together within the organisation (Cross & Carbery, 2016). The junior academic middle managers' roles and responsibilities are constantly changing; the FHSC requires the junior academic middle managers to be proactive and responsive, consequently their staff development needs are changeable.

During the preceding years, the case University steadily expanded, and student numbers grew, as did the variety of programmes offered. These changes were not

just specific to the FHSC, nevertheless the rate of growth and expansion potentially affected the staff within the FHSC, as resources were redirected and reviewed in response to the need for efficiency savings across the University (Thomas-Gregory, 2014). The strategic developments within the University continued, with further expansion and growth during the 21st Century focussed on business, entrepreneurialism and international growth. These changes reflect how United Kingdom (UK) governments have pursued deregulation to ensure higher education is available to the masses (Taberner, 2018). The influences of marketisation and neoliberal approaches driven by government reforms reflect the global trend towards HE becoming a consumer- led business (Grey, 2013; Taberner, 2018).

Throughout the literature academic middle managers (AMM) are defined as HoD, Associate Deans and Dean levels in a University (Floyd & Dimmock, 2011; Thomas-Gregory, 2014). It is recognised within the literature that academic middle managers have increasingly complex roles with competing demands due to customer-led approaches (Floyd & Dimmock, 2011; Mercer, 2009; Thomas-Gregory, 2014). Within the FHSC in the case University there is an additional level of middle management who support and advise the academic middle managers in the operational aspects of their roles. The junior academic middle manager responsibilities within the FHSC also support academic middle managers on specific Faculty priorities such as international business, practice learning and business and enterprise activities. These FHSC roles do not feature in the literature, which suggests this is an under-researched role. Yet, this type of role is evident in other universities, where there are academics who have informal middle management or leadership roles below the HoD. These roles and responsibilities are usually aligned to the roles of Principal Lecturers, Directors and Programme Leaders, which could be considered to be comparable to the junior academic middle managers in this study (Mercer, 2009; Thorpe & Garside, 2017).

In addition, it is important to highlight that junior academic middle managers and academic middle managers, who are accountable for professionally regulated programmes, have competing responsibilities over and above academic middle

managers who do not deliver or have responsibility for professional programmes. These professional responsibilities include the management of students in practice placements, enhanced quality assurance monitoring, duty of care for public safety and maintaining professional registration. These responsibilities also involve ensuring timely academic development and attending professional body statutory reviews, which add further complexity to professional education (Thomas-Gregory, 2014). The FHSC's professional programmes are delivered in collaboration with practice stakeholders; these programmes have a practice element that is fifty percent of the programme. This is not without its challenges, because the FHSC has limited authority in practice settings. Nevertheless, the FHSC works collaboratively to assure the quality and governance of practice learning in partnership with practice colleagues. This includes undertaking audits, building placement capacity, monitoring student evaluations and sharing information to enhance practice learning (Nursing and Midwifery Council [NMC], 2018a, 2018b).

This research study was undertaken during a time of unprecedented change within HE; both health care settings and HE have experienced an evolving and changing landscape. The recent policy changes in health care education such as the NHS Long-Term Plan (NHS England, 2019), Shape of Caring Review - Raising the Bar (Higher Education England, 2015), and NMC Standards of Proficiency for Registered Nurses, and Standards for Student Supervision and Assessment (NMC, 2018a, 2018b) all need to be integrated in the FHSC curricula and organisational strategy. There are also recently introduced specific HE sector metrics such as the National Student Survey (NSS), league tables, the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) for teaching, learning and assessment, and the Research Excellence Framework (REF) for high quality research, which have significantly affected all levels of the University's workforce. The independent regulator, the Office for Students (OfS), which was introduced following the Higher Education and Research Act (2017), is a significant reform to affect the HE sector. The OfS principal objective is to ensure *"All students, from all backgrounds, and with the ability and desire to undertake higher education are supported to access, succeed in and progress from higher education"* (Office for Students, 2018, p. 14).

It is expected that all universities will strive to achieve OfS objectives to ensure a high-quality education experience, provide progression into further education or employment, whilst also ensuring value for money. It is suggested that subsequent TEF metrics will enable universities to demonstrate how they are enhancing teaching quality, student experience and meeting the OfS objectives (OfS, 2018). However, this neoliberal approach adds additional pressures to achieve TEF metrics, which may cause volatility in an already pressurised sector. These government and policy reforms coupled with the changes in funding for health care professional programmes has at times been turbulent and unsettling for the case FHSC. The junior academic middle managers and academic middle managers in particular have found a significant shift in their priorities and workload as a result of this increased governance, metric driven approach and marketisation (Floyd & Dimmock, 2011; Knight & Trowler, 2000). These metrics, together with the professional policy changes, have increased the complexity and responsibility of the junior academic middle manager and academic middle manager roles when contributing to the strategic leadership of the FHSC and professional programmes. The additional policy and metric requirements also have an impact on the overall academic workload that is managed by academic middle managers and junior academic middle managers. The unpredictable and volatile environment in the FHSC further highlights the necessity to review the staff development needs of junior academic middle managers. The literature supports this view, demonstrating the direct effect of frequent changes in government and social policy on academic staff and junior academic middle managers working in professional education similar to the FHSC (Rolfe, 2012; Thomas-Gregory, 2014).

The introduction of fees for health and social care students in August 2017, is a further complication for health and social care education. This is an England-only initiative that was additional to the cessation of the student nurse bursary. Since these changes there has been a thirty-one percent fall in applications to nursing programmes and the resultant workforce crisis in the NHS has further increased the pressure to recruit to nursing programmes (Council of Deans of Health, 2018). At the time of completing this study there has been a subsequent increase of five percent

in applications in England, and an overall increase of six percent in applications in the UK (Council of Deans of Health, 2019a). The University and colleges admissions service (UCAS) has also reported an increase of seven percent in applications from men, a three percent increase in applications in the 26-34 population in the UK and a seven percent increase in the over 35-year old age group across the UK (Council of Deans Health, 2019a). These statistics for 2019 are a positive set of results regarding recruitment and demonstrate an upward trend in nursing programme recruitment. However, it is recognised that this slight improvement has taken a tremendous amount of hard work, which has added to the workload of the FHSC and particularly the junior academic middle managers and HoDs (Council of Deans Health, 2019a). These political reforms and organisational changes, coupled with the dynamic and rapidly evolving marketplace in the UK HE sector, necessitate a continual review of the roles and identities of junior academic middle managers and as a result these are being reframed and revisited (Winter, 2009).

1.5 Research aim and objectives

The research aim of this study was mutually agreed with the CIG members. We wanted to gain an in-depth understanding of the personal and staff development needs of junior academic middle managers in a FHSC during a period of organisational change.

The following research objectives were agreed by the co-researchers:

1. To identify the junior academic middle managers' perceptions of their personal and staff development needs in a FHSC.
2. To create opportunities for collaborative reflection and peer support to enhance academic support and professional development for junior academic middle managers during organisational change.
3. To consider and critically appraise the theoretical and practice-based literature in relation to the findings of the study through the lens of Bourdieu's theory of practice.

1.6 Roles under investigation

The junior academic middle managers involved in this study were Deputy Head and Coordinator roles who are all the same academic pay grade in the FHSC. However, their remits were varied and were either Department or Faculty specific roles. Pseudonyms have been used to protect the anonymity of the CIG members.

The literature presents the roles of academic middle managers and junior academic middle managers as a particularly significant intermediary role between senior management and the academic workforce (Floyd & Dimmock, 2011; Mercer, 2009; Thomas-Gregory, 2014). However, there is a paucity of literature focussing specifically on junior academic middle managers' development needs; much of the literature is focussed on academic middle managers. Therefore, I have utilised literature related to academic middle managers and junior academic middle managers throughout this thesis.

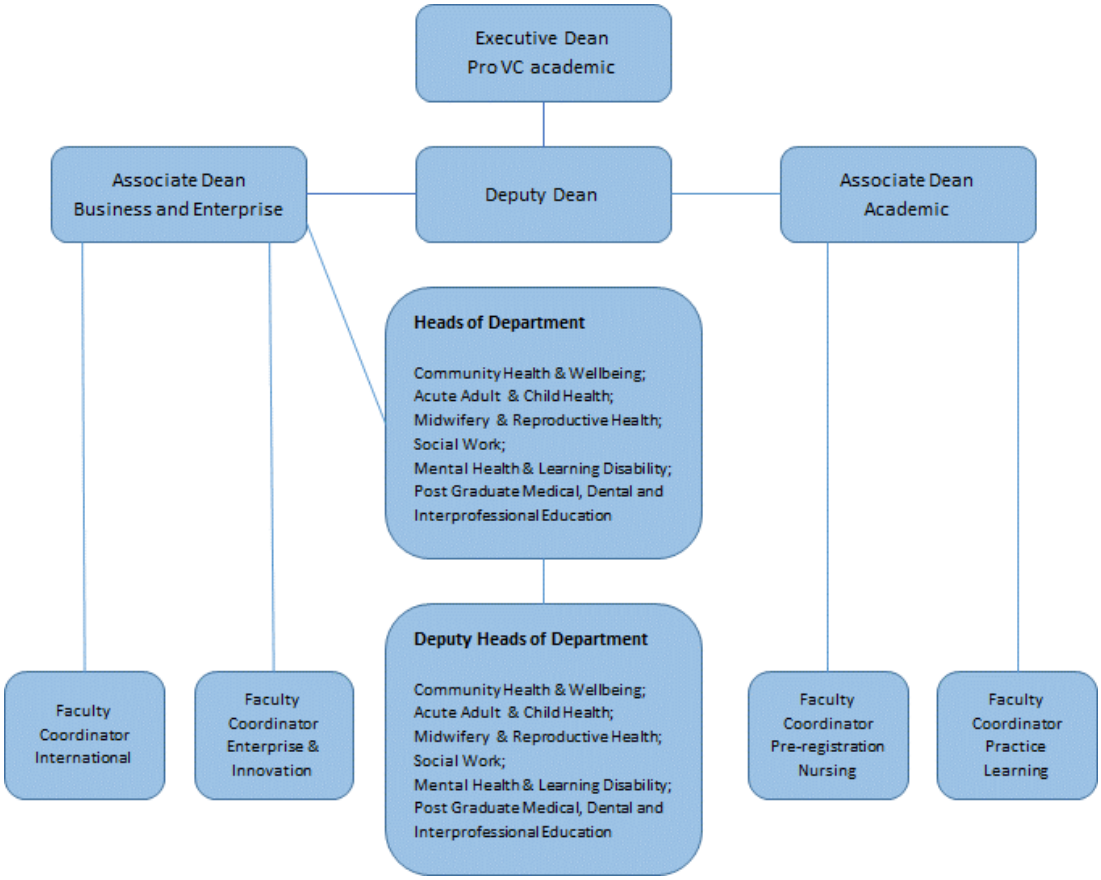
The FHSC reconfiguration was prompted by radical policy reforms (Browne, 2010) that were the most significant changes seen in higher education funding in England for over fifty years. The Browne review removed the cap on tuition fees and increased competition between universities, with a shift from taxpayer funding to graduates paying tuition fees from their future earnings, these reforms introduced student choice and a customer-led ethos. The reconfiguration involved the creation and appointment of four additional junior academic middle manager roles to support the academic middle managers in the development and enhancement of the Faculty's future strategic direction. The participation of all junior academic middle managers was central to the research aim of understanding the junior academic middle managers' perceived development needs, consequently co-operative inquiry was adopted. The research participants would form a co-operative inquiry group to promote a shared space with opportunities for reflection and learning-in-action. In this way, they would build collaborative relationships to enable reflexivity of mutual concerns and actions that impact on their roles (Coghlan, 2013). The CIG had the potential to influence and shape the future vision of the FHSC. It is acknowledged that to enable the junior academic middle managers to reach their full potential and

develop within their roles, a period of support and staff development is advantageous (Floyd, 2012; Floyd & Dimmock, 2011; Thomas-Gregory, 2014).

1.6.1 The management structure of the Faculty

At the time of this study, the FHSC was divided into six academic subject departments. The Faculty senior management team comprised of an Executive Dean and a Deputy Dean supported by two Associate Deans, one with responsibility for business and enterprise and the other for teaching and learning. The junior academic middle managers recruited to this study support the HoDs and Associate Deans, in contributing effectively to the strategic vision and direction of the Faculty. The FHSC management structure is outlined in Figure 2.

Figure 2: The management structure of the Faculty



The role of junior academic middle managers has become increasingly more complex and demanding within the case University, due to the constant demand for

universities to provide value for money and find ways to make efficiency savings, whilst continually enhancing the quality of service provision (Floyd, 2012; Floyd & Dimmock, 2011; OfS, 2018). It is suggested that there is still substantial scope for universities to achieve wider efficiencies that ensure value for money and the delivery of high-quality research and teaching (Diamond, 2011; OfS, 2018). The marketisation of education is not a new phenomenon; from a neoliberal context, HEIs have been transforming over recent decades (Grey, 2013).

It is recognised in the literature that junior academic middle managers and academic middle managers are organisational assets for the future (Mercer, 2009; Thomas-Gregory, 2014). Therefore, there is a need to develop shared values and trust, which could be supported by a bespoke staff development framework. Junior academic middle managers need opportunities to accumulate capital which is required for the future needs of the organisation. During periods of austerity, some organisations respond to financial challenges by cutting costs; this is frequently achieved by focussing on organisational efficiency and effectiveness rather than innovation and creativity (Burnes, 2009; Thomas-Gregory, 2014). Developing new ways of working requires strategic reform, particularly in the leadership and management of HE, rather than an over-reliance on cost-saving initiatives (Grey, 2013; Taberner, 2018). Yet, it is recognised that efficiencies can provide opportunities to review service delivery and develop new strategies for enhancement and change in practice (Department of Business Innovation & Skills [BIS], 2016). The TEF metrics could be considered an impetus for nurse academics to shift towards research-led teaching whilst engaging in pedagogical endeavours with students and practitioners. Having considered the phenomena under investigation it is from this context that I decided my focus for the outset literature review before commencing the research study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter critically reviews the literature relating to academic managers working in HE, particularly in respect to professional education, social reforms and the dominant influential political drivers that are the concern of this research study. The rationale for the inclusion of a literature review chapter in an action research study will also be explored.

2.2 Rationale for literature review

It is widely acknowledged that action research is data driven. The developing and iterative approach of action research demands that the researcher continually reviews the literature (Fisher & Phelps, 2006). Revisiting the literature enables the researcher to make provisional interpretations of the emerging data. Davis (2007) eloquently calls this process a 'story unfolding' arguing the process is simultaneous, ultimately enhancing the researcher's understanding of their research story. Action researchers need to be mindful of this iterative process, and the evolving nature of co-operative inquiry and its symbiosis with the literature. I was initially hesitant to write a literature review chapter because this research is not concerned with finding gaps in the literature, instead it seeks to advance knowledge in the FHSC and enhance junior academic middle managers' development needs in the organisation.

There is much debate in the action research literature regarding the integration of a literature review (Dick, 1993; McNiff, Lomax & Whitehead, 2002; Mellor, 2007). As such, I believed it was key to developing an understanding of the phenomenon in an open-minded and collaborative way whilst being cognisant of the significance of taking this approach. Furthermore, the iterative nature of action research and the relationship to the literature suggests that action research is not a linear methodology nor is it driven by gaps in the literature (McNiff, 2000; Reason, 1988). Indeed, it is imperative that the needs of the participants and ultimately the

organisation are considered and debated to elucidate the dilemmas the practitioners are facing (Mellor, 2010).

However, I was cognisant that traditional research conventions consider a literature review an essential component of any research study (Bryman, 2008; Stokes & Wall, 2014). After much self-deliberation, dialogue with colleagues and supervisors, and consideration of the conceptual framework of Bourdieu's theory of practice, I decided that a literature review was essential to draw together the key literature. It would also provide the academic context, by developing a connection to the existing body of knowledge and the conceptual framework of Bourdieu (Coghlan & Brannick, 2014). The approach taken to the literature review is referred to as 'outset' literature (Coghlan & Brannick, 2014). It was also hoped that inclusion of the outset literature would give the thesis a traditional academic structure that would aid reader navigation through the messiness or fuzziness of the action research process (McNiff & Whitehead, 2009; Mellor, 2007). Hence, I decided to write in a more traditional thesis format, even though initially I found this an intensely difficult process, as I struggled to extrapolate the literature from the iterative process that had occurred simultaneously over a period of time.

In keeping with the nature of action research and co-operative inquiry, the literature review continually evolved throughout the study including organisational and social reforms and the dominant influential political drivers (Appendices 3 & 4). The reforms altered the context of the junior academic middle managers and the organisational behaviour and culture of the FHSC during the research, thereby impacting upon junior academic middle managers' roles and their development needs. Research, particularly co-operative inquiry, is context driven, and influenced by the dominant culture of a particular historical period which changes over time. Bourdieu (1977) views the world we inhabit as a social field which is both practice orientated and context driven (Maton, 2012). It is acknowledged epistemologically and ontologically the nature of reality and knowledge changes over time (Crotty, 1998). Thus, utilisation of Bourdieu's conceptual framework enables the exploration of existing knowledge and examines how it was created. As a researcher, it was

therefore important to critically analyse and explore the predominant outset literature in order to consider the research findings alongside any new knowledge (Coghlan & Brannick, 2014).

As an action researcher I am cognisant that a literature review identifies what is already known about the subject area and supports the relevance of the research study. For most research studies a review of the literature provides scaffolding for the thesis (Bowling & Ebrahim, 2005; Bryman, 2008; Crotty, 1998). Undertaking a literature review is a process whereby historical, political and empirical positions are considered, and in so doing the researcher is able to position themselves within the research process. This literature review also acted as a structure for the CIG, because it informed and focussed the study and highlighted the pertinent issues in the literature that were also issues within our own practice. It was a starting point for reflective conversations and provided a broader context for thinking as a CIG and a platform for further debates and consideration.

The social policy and academic outset literature review (Coghlan & Brannick, 2014) was beneficial in developing the emergent theoretical and conceptual frameworks, as we became engaged with the themes in the literature. Throughout the literature review, being cognisant of the methodological underpinnings of co-operative inquiry was central to the spirit of the study. In keeping with the methodological framework, it was essential that the issues to be deliberated were formulated by the CIG members. The literature review became an essential component of the study. It facilitated the CIG's greater understanding and the advancement of the study towards its aim and objectives. A critical appraisal of the empirical data and the utilisation of the pertaining literature assisted the CIG in developing the iterative action research approach by developing critical and reflective discourse. Therefore, learning from the practice-based papers, policy documents and other researchers was fundamental to the study. This process enabled the CIG to understand the context of the organisational policies and learn from the findings and the limitations of other research studies. This helped the CIG members to gain a good understanding of previously published research studies and the complexities of

professionals working within HE (Bryman, 2008; Coghlan & Brannick, 2014; Crotty, 1998). Bourdieu's (1977) theory of practice was introduced to participants at the beginning of the research study, and his key concepts were revisited throughout the CIG meetings.

2.3 Aim of the literature review

The aim of the literature review was to ascertain the volume and quality of the relevant literature to complement and inform the research study. A selection process was undertaken to ensure that the most appropriate and pertinent studies to this research were chosen. A process of critical appraisal was also undertaken utilising the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP, 2006) tool to aid the judgement of the quality of the literature (Appendix 4). The key papers deemed relevant to this study were a combination of empirical research, academic papers and practice-based papers to ensure the research study was contextualised. It is important to systematically read each paper to ensure relevancy to the study (Aveyard, 2014), undertaking this process ensures the validity, trustworthiness and credibility of the papers included in the literature review and pertinence to the research. The information from each search was organised according to the identified themes. I decided to categorise the literature review in a thematic structure in order to present the key issues pertinent to the research study (Stokes & Wall, 2014).

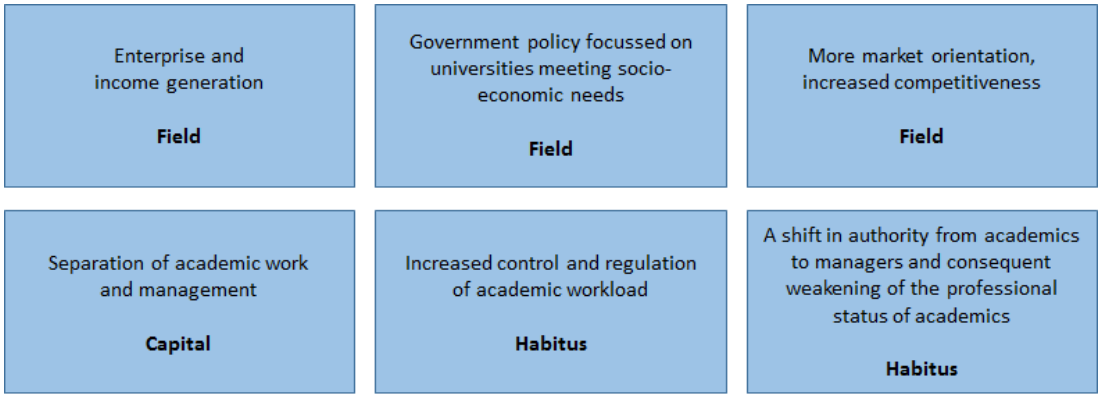
There were three dominant emergent themes from the literature review that were pertinent to the research study:

1. Impact of managerialism and neoliberalism
2. Leadership roles of academic middle managers
3. Development of academic middle managers.

2.4 Impact of managerialism and neoliberalism

For decades the terminology new managerialism and more recently managerialism has become prevalent in the HE literature and has proliferated into a contemporary phenomenon and a predominant dogma in UK universities (Deem, 1998, 2004; Floyd, 2012; Floyd & Dimmock, 2011; Mercer, 2009; Shepherd, 2018; Thomas-Gregory, 2014). Shepherd (2018) suggests there is no clearly established definition of managerialism. However, it is debated in the literature that managerialism is the implementation of reforms and working practices such as effectiveness, efficiency, value for money and striving for excellence, which have been adopted by HE from private sector and industry (Deem, 1998, 2004; Floyd & Dimmock, 2011; Shepherd, 2018). Despite there being no agreed definition, Whitchurch and Gordon (2010) suggest there are six main characteristics of managerialism in HE, these are replicated in Figure 3.

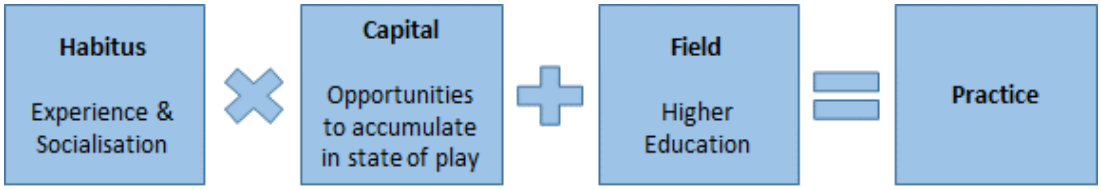
Figure 3: Six main characteristics of managerialism in HE adapted from Whitchurch and Gordon (2010) and Bourdieu's key concepts (1977)



Neoliberalism is concerned with individual choice and prevails as a free market economy to introduce characteristics of competitiveness and an entrepreneurial culture. Shepherd (2018) argues that these characteristics have invaded HE and the social world. This correlates with the chosen conceptual framework which supports the impact managerialism and neoliberalism has on the social world that junior academic middle managers inhabit. Bourdieu's key concepts of capital, field and habitus as the interplay between neoliberalism, and his key concepts ultimately have

an impact upon the individual's habitus in the field of play. Figure 3 demonstrates the interconnection between Whitchurch and Gordon's (2010) six main characteristics and Bourdieu's the key concepts, each key concept has been aligned to the characteristic which it has the most synergy to. Considerations were given by the co-researchers to how Bourdieu's thinking tools could support and enable them to make sense of their social world. This approach is supported in the extant literature where Bourdieu's key concepts were adopted to explore professional and cultural socialisation and staff development needs in HE (Floyd, 2016; Thomas-Gregory, 2014). It is also important to clarify that each characteristic will affect the practice of junior academic middle managers and their practice as depicted in Figure 4 which illustrates the interplay between Bourdieu's key concepts, neoliberalism and practice.

Figure 4: Bourdieu's equation related to the impact of neoliberalism



Bourdieu considers neoliberalism directly threatens education by eroding the production of knowledge (Brown & Szeman, 2000). It could be argued that since the introduction of quasi-markets in the early 1980s, there has been an attack on education with an ever-increasing emphasis on outputs, performance metrics, changing working practices and management of academics. Some commentators argue that knowledge is being reconceptualised as a commodity due to the marketisation of education, and in this way the value of intellectual and cultural capital and the importance of knowledge creation has been downgraded (Taberner, 2018; Wall & Perrin, 2015). As there is an understandable need to continue to ensure value for money for students and high-quality education and research. The OfS (2018) states that creating an environment in which universities can thrive is crucial whilst maintaining academic freedom and institutional autonomy. Although the TEF could be viewed as an opportunity for universities to succeed and thrive,

consideration needs to be given to the unintended consequences of financial incentivisation of universities (Franco-Santos & Otley, 2017). This neoliberalist approach could have a negative effect on the traditional values of knowledge creation and dissemination, whilst also negatively impacting on student fees. Franco-Santos & Otley (2017) maintain that universities will learn to play the TEF game. Consequently, there are no assurances that the TEF will enhance teaching and learning quality. It is difficult to comprehend how this competitive approach will provide the academic freedom and institutional autonomy (OfS, 2018) that universities need in order to thrive and succeed in the future.

The literature asserts that the turbulent nature of the HE sector causes particular challenges for academic middle managers (Floyd, 2016; Floyd & Dimmock, 2011; Thomas-Gregory, 2014). Constant political changes result in a relentless impetus for change within HE, and as such the marketisation of HE is continually evolving. These challenges have been particularly apparent in health and social care education. In November 2015, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that the usual commissioning approach, of fully funded nursing and midwifery places would cease in September 2017. The implications for health care HE providers are that the guaranteed funding from government for health care education has been replaced by student loans and the introduction of student fees (Council of Deans of Health, 2018). This, therefore, puts the student firmly in the role of consumer with expectations that HE will provide value for money, increased choices, higher contact hours, and good employment prospects which are aligned to the marketisation ethos.

The literature points to the recent changes imposed by the government and University funding bodies that have placed additional pressures on providers of health care education, leaving them in a very challenging situation (Council of Deans of Health, 2019a; Council of Deans of Health, 2018; Thomas-Gregory, 2014). Funding changes have led to a reduction in the number of mature students entering health care education. This combined with a declining demographic of eighteen-year olds and the uncertainty of Brexit leaves HEIs with lower than expected student numbers

(Council of Deans Health, 2019b). Academic middle managers and junior academic middle managers in the HE sector are endeavouring to increase student satisfaction and student numbers by promoting a more diverse student body and experience in line with TEF metrics. There is an impetus to continually enhance the quality of teaching and research outputs with significantly reduced resources. It could be argued that in order to enhance teaching, learning and research quality, academic staff development is essential to enhance the efficiency and knowledge of the academic workforce (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development [CIPD], 2017a). Staff development typically requires organisational investment, this investment does not have to be monetary. It is evident that using strategies such as informal peer learning can be beneficial in the workplace and could be valued more by staff and organisations (Boud, Cohen, & Sampson, 2001).

The increased requirements of TEF and REF coupled with the additional emphasis on skill acquisition, employability and market readiness of students on professional programmes further demonstrates the central tenets of neoliberalism and marketisation of education (Taberner, 2018; Wall & Perrin, 2015). This neoliberal approach to developing a future health care workforce is not congruent with the move towards an all graduate profession, where there is an expectation nurses will be the critical problem solvers and thinkers of the future (Pringle, 2016). Bourdieu (1977) would argue that these changes may cause conflict in the habitus of future nurses; they will have learned the rules of the game but constantly shifting rules could ultimately alter their position in the field.

Continuous monitoring, benchmarking and performance indicators in relation to the current metrics such as the REF and TEF has led to the increased marketisation of HE. This means that junior academic middle managers and academic middle managers in the HE sector are facing unprecedented times with competing demands and challenges (Floyd, 2016; Pepper & Giles, 2015; Thomas-Gregory, 2014). Johnson (2002) undertook a two-year research study funded by an Economic and Social Research Council grant to discover if new managerialism was evident in the UK HE sector. The research employed focus groups and semi-structured interviews with

academics, academic-managers and senior administrators from both pre-and post-1992 universities (Johnson, 2002). The final phase of Johnson's research included detailed case studies on four HEIs, where interviews were undertaken with the same target population. Johnson's (2002) findings suggest that the role of each academic middle manager was influenced by their discipline or subject and that there were stark differences between apparently comparable roles in Schools and in Faculties. The job roles of the participants in Johnson's study may have been equivalent, nevertheless, the turbulent nature of external subject areas and policy changes affected each academic middle manager role differently depending on the discipline and subject area. It is evident that the subject area of professional education in which the FHSC is functioning is a highly volatile and unpredictable environment.

Mercer (2009) also undertook research to investigate how new managerialism affected junior academic middle managers, utilising a case study methodology in an education department in a UK University. Mercer (2009) found that junior academic middle managers faced similar pressures and challenges to those experienced by academic middle managers such as HoDs and Deans. Thomas-Gregory's (2014) case study research in a pre-1992 UK University School of Health Care considers why health care practitioners became academic middle manager in HE. This qualitative study explored academic middle managers professional identities, examining the interactional balance between the multiple roles of the academic middle manager.

The findings concluded that neoliberalism and the subsequent marketisation of HE, policy reforms and shifts in organisational cultures, had a negative impact on academic middle managers' perception of their roles. Several academic middle managers in Thomas-Gregory's study believed there had been alterations in their professional identity, because the reconstruction of their professional role aligned them to the strategic priorities and vision of the University and moved them further away from practice (Thomas-Gregory, 2014). The study findings did conclude that the academic middle managers were uniquely situated between their subject discipline and the policy changes that have consequences for practice and HE. A key finding was that the Dean held a prominent and influential role in interpreting the

needs of the University and reducing through regulation the cultural disparities of the one size fits all attitude in HE (Thomas-Gregory, 2014). The influential role of the Dean could be viewed as contributing to the organisational climate or how it feels to work in an organisation (Cross & Carbery, 2016). It is suggested that academic staff need to be encouraged to contribute to the effectiveness of the organisation and this can be achieved by developing democratic conversations (Cross & Carbery, 2016; Thomas-Gregory, 2014). However, it should be recognised that organisational behaviour affects the organisational values and culture. For junior academic middle managers to feel safe there needs to be a shared sense of values, recognition of their roles and support from superiors and this requires a strong organisational culture (Cross & Carbery, 2016; Schein, 1985). It is argued that socialisation into an organisation is central to developing organisational behaviour, and when considering internal or external recruitment there needs to be synergy with the organisational culture (CIPD, 2017a).

Floyd & Dimmock's (2011) post-1992 University case study investigated the experiences of academic middle managers, exploring how the role of the academic middle manager influenced career trajectory. In keeping with other literature findings, they suggest that both internal and external pressures negatively affect career pathways of academic middle managers, with differences in the expectations of the academic middle manager role occurring across departments and faculties. The findings from this study, unlike Thomas-Gregory's (2014) study demonstrate that the academic middle manager subject discipline was an important consideration that is neglected in HE. It is recognised that staff are valuable assets (CIPD, 2017a) and, in view of the current workforce crisis in the NHS, universities delivering professional programmes need to ensure effective staff recruitment and retention. CIPD (2017a) suggests that recruitment and retention can be facilitated by valuing staff and human capital, and by providing employee flexibility and supporting talent management, this in turn maximises staff development opportunities in key subject disciplines in the organisation. The HE sector needs to be responsive to the complex changes that are taking place in subject disciplines (Thomas-Gregory, 2014) and adapt accordingly

to promote health and wellbeing of employees and maintain a motivated workforce (Tims, Bakker & Derks, 2013).

Taberner (2018) undertook a study across six different English HEIs, considering whether marketisation had an impact on the nature of the workload of academic staff. The participants interviewed ranged across a variety of academic roles including professors, academic middle managers and lecturers. The key findings were that marketisation negatively affected the roles across HEIs and led to intensification of workload, prioritisation of efficiency over effectiveness and de-professionalisation and fragmentation of the HEI (Taberner, 2018). The literature points to the potential damage neoliberalism and marketisation can have on HE, particularly in relation to academics' increased workload, autonomy, the creation of knowledge and undertaking research.

From a professional programme perspective, the challenges and expectations of clinical partners and professional regulators adds to the complexity of the junior academic middle manager role, and this may ultimately negatively affect student experience and the metrics of TEF, REF and NSS. Since the 1980s there has been an ongoing move towards marketisation of HE, and within the FHSC students are now paying customers; this approach gives choice to students who are purchasing their education (Browne, 2015; OfS, 2018). This consumer-led approach imposed by the policy reforms has changed the relationship between universities and students, who now demand a good degree classification and value for money (OfS, 2018). This consumer-led approach has introduced further competition in the sector and the TEF has influenced the marketisation of education (OfS, 2018). There are elements of the TEF that could be mutually beneficial to students and HE, one of which is the emphasis on co-production and engagement in a partnership approach. Unfortunately, due to the intensely competitive nature of HE with an overemphasis on outputs rather than inputs, there is the potential that the TEF will become a tick-box exercise. The change in student expectations and the introduction of the TEF has triggered a transformation in the way the HE sector functions, with a shift to metrics

and profits rather than knowledge creation and dissemination (Taberner, 2018). This change in priorities needs to be managed effectively by universities.

It is argued by Piderit (2000) that change can also adversely affect organisational culture and behaviour. This can be further compounded with the marketisation of professional education and recent changes including the cessation of the student bursary and the introduction of student fees and loans in health care education. The introduction of league tables and the increased emphasis on the NSS, Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) and Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) has also affected the way HE is financed. This neo-classical economics approach now transfers financial responsibility to the student as the consumer, and results in a change in students' attitudes and expectations (Grey, 2013). These policy reforms have instigated a shift in the power dynamic, increasing students' desire to exercise their power to demand value for money and choice (Tomlinson, 2014). This change in student status empowers students and compels HEIs to be proactive and responsive to the student voice in the current competitive consumer-led environment. The impact of these reforms is significant, HEIs are reviewing and reframing the student experience which ultimately affects the organisational behaviour, change and culture (Tomlinson, 2014).

Piderit (2000) contends that there is often a resistance to change during periods of immense change and political reforms. Organisations need to adopt more agile working practices and cultivate a culture of teamwork, to engage with staff to reduce anxieties, stress and feelings of resentment (Cross & Carbery, 2016; Ellis, 2012; Piderit, 2000). This needs to be enacted whilst promoting support and encouraging a change in culture from a bottom up approach thus promoting a democratic change in organisational culture and behaviour. The literature points to complex competing demands and political reforms which affect staff at all levels within HE, and increasingly more demands are placed upon junior academic middle managers. Studies suggest junior academic middle managers are juggling emergent tensions on a daily basis, often feeling stressed and institutionally powerless (Floyd, 2016; Taberner, 2018; Thomas-Gregory, 2014). Mercer (2009) argues that the impact upon

junior academic middle managers is similar to the impact on the academic middle managers in previous studies. She suggests that academic middle managers are able to reduce their workload by devolving some responsibilities in an effort to comply with marketisation of the HE sector. This shift directly affects junior academic middle managers roles and may overburden the junior academic middle managers, particularly if they lack the knowledge and skills to undertake the devolved responsibilities.

Mercer (2009) acknowledges that junior academic middle managers have similar development needs and pressures in their roles to academic middle managers in their roles. Pepper and Giles (2015) reported that it is beneficial to develop internal support networks, which can potentially develop collegiality and interactional relationships for academic middle managers. This is supported by the research findings from Thomas-Gregory (2014), where it was found that role models and anti-role models are a significant influence on academic managers. Therefore, internal networks could be a supportive mechanism for academic middle managers and junior academic middle managers.

The literature depicts managerialism, and neoliberal approaches as having led to government changes to health care education. Changes in funding have compounded the challenges and complexity of an already volatile environment in HE as it adapts to marketisation of health care education (Browne, 2015). The major shift in the way practice partners and students view education, has altered the responsibility, accountability and role expectations of junior academic middle managers and academic middle managers. Research studies throughout the past decades suggest that these changes, plus the diverse cultures and working practices in HE, have had a detrimental effect on staff morale, retention and succession planning (Deem, 2004; Floyd, 2012; Mercer, 2009; Thomas-Gregory, 2014).

Finally, the White Paper Success as a Knowledge Economy: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice (BIS, 2016) clearly sets out an ambitious plan. Its points further emphasise the marketisation of HE. The paper proposes further

reforms to create a competitive market in HE, which update the architecture and metrics, thus empowering students to have a choice. As the competitive marketisation of HE intensifies, this may open the marketplace to other providers offering students a more affordable option, such as private organisations and the NHS. More recently the NHS has been instrumental in developing the nursing associate workforce for their own workforce needs (NHS, 2016) and the advent of higher apprenticeships may give employers the impetus to pursue degree awarding powers.

It is recognised that HEIs are complex and multifunctional organisations operating in a competitive neoliberal marketplace (Deem, 2004; Floyd, 2012; Mercer, 2009; Thomas-Gregory, 2014). These challenges and perceived pressures, particularly in relation to the impact on academic managers, have been investigated on a small scale. Key findings relate to professional and personal identity which if not managed effectively have a negative impact on the academics in these roles (Floyd, 2012). The literature suggests that the challenges faced by junior academic middle managers requires an organisational approach. It is imperative that organisational culture, climate and behaviour is understood when considering staff development needs because organisational values and culture effects the working environment of individuals. The organisational culture ultimately impacts on performance, motivation and health and wellbeing (Cross & Carbery, 2016; Tims et al., 2013; Piderit, 2000). From a Bourdieusian stance, the culture of the social field can be seen as a constraining force, which affects habitus formation, field position and ultimately the junior academic middle managers role and staff development needs.

2.5 Leadership roles of academic middle managers

The literature suggests that in order for universities to survive and flourish, there is an urgent need to enhance leadership skills for academic leaders and provide additional support mechanisms for academic staff development (Bolden, Gosling, O'Brien, Peters, Ryan, Haslam, & Winkelman 2012; Bolden, Petrov & Gosling, 2008; Bryman, 2009; Deiser, 2011; Kulber & Sayer, 2010). However, despite the literature

raising concerns, there appears to be a paucity of literature that focusses on the academic middle manager role and only one research study focussing on the junior academic middle manager role. Bolden et al.'s (2012) multi-method study focusses on all academic staff across HE. The study, which was funded by the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education, concludes that individuals in HE regarded academic leadership to be outside of the remit of formal managerial roles in universities, with many academics perceiving academic leadership to be concerned with action, creating opportunities and empowering others.

Thus, academic leadership could be viewed as positive role modelling which promotes leadership, creates academic values and enhances professional identity in relation to academia. Leadership is central to the change management process, particularly during planned change. It is suggested that middle managers also need to be responsive at times of unprecedented change (Cross & Carbery, 2016). Kotter (1996), suggests there are three steps for leaders to successfully effect change and embed new ways of working. According to Kotter (1996), phase one creates a climate for change, phase two is organisational engagement and enablement, and the third phase is the implementation and sustainability of the change. It is asserted that engagement with the wider organisation is crucial for leaders to be effective (Cross & Carbery, 2016).

A good relationship with HR can also enable the facilitation of change to develop new ways of working. A research study that highlights the influence of good HR practice was conducted by Liu & DeFrank (2013) who undertook a survey across 90 organisations to examine the role of a transformational leadership climate, HR practices and self-interest on knowledge sharing. Their findings demonstrate the need for HR professionals and departments to work together to promote knowledge sharing by facilitating a transformational leadership climate particularly at times of turbulence and change. Additionally, Liu & DeFrank (2013) suggest that team-based job design and development of knowledge sharing initiatives can be beneficial for individuals, teams and organisations. A study by Al-Kurdi, El-Haddadeh & Eldabi (2019) further supports the findings and recommendations of Liu & DeFrank's (2013)

study. Al-Kurdi et al. (2019) observe that universities would be ideally placed to develop HR practices of knowledge sharing. The study findings reveal that although organisational culture has an impact on organisational behaviour, it is the organisational climate that directly affects employee behaviour. Furthermore, the study reports that positive relationships with academic leaders, enabled trust and promoted a positive organisational climate that strongly influenced the academics who participated in the study (Al-Kurdi, et al., 2019).

During austerity, universities constantly review their strategic direction and reconsider their priorities. This process needs to include a strategy for growth and development, whilst managing costs effectively if they wish to succeed (Taberner, 2018). Within the current literature, staff development alongside academic leadership is thought to be a vital component to foster the required change management process within HE organisations (McRoy & Gibbs, 2009; Ramsden, 1998; Shattock, 2010). Floyd and Dimmock's (2011) research on a post-1992 university has similarities to the case University in this study. The research focussed on academic middle managers who were HoDs and the influences on their career decisions. Against a backdrop of increased complexity, including internal and external factors such as the growth in student numbers, the findings suggest that the bureaucratic infrastructure of HE resulted in the roles of academic middle managers becoming more complex and challenging.

Floyd and Dimmock (2011) argue that the change towards managerialist practices compounded by changes at government level and in HE funding produced a negative impact on academic middle managers. In keeping with other research studies there were also notable differences in academic middle manager roles within universities, faculties and departments. Floyd and Dimmock (2011) use the terms 'jugglers', 'copers' or 'strugglers' when describing participants' experiences, and also suggest there was conflict between the multiple identities that exist within the academic middle manager role, such as teacher, researcher and manager. Managing these personal and professional identities would appear to cause role conflict for some academics (Floyd & Dimmock, 2011; Mercer, 2009; Thomas-Gregory, 2014). It is

asserted that staff recruitment and retention is a key priority during organisational change and academic managers and leaders need to ensure succession planning through recruitment, staff appraisal, staff development and talent management (CIPD, 2017a). HR and academic middle managers should work collaboratively to recruit staff who have the knowledge and skills to meet the strategic direction of the organisation. Working closely with HR practitioners enables appropriate job descriptions to be developed, and staff development activities to reflect the changing needs of the organisation (CIPD, 2017a).

Floyd and Dimmock's (2011) study concludes that the HE sector does value academic career capital which is influenced by the personal and professional identities that academic middle managers bring to the role. This in turn accelerates career progression and promotion. Viewed through a Bourdieusian lens, this can be regarded in terms of the habitus of the individual and accumulated capital being converted into a social position within the field (Bourdieu, 1977; Maton, 2012; Petit-dit-Dariel, Wharrad & Windle, 2014). Floyd's (2009) framework employed the key concepts of socialisation, identity and career trajectory in relation to the terms 'jugglers', 'copers' or 'strugglers'.

Burnes (2009) highlights that during periods of austerity, organisations may manage challenges by applying financial constraints that focus on efficiency and effectiveness to the detriment of innovation and creativity. This frequently results in organisation restructuring and changes to roles and responsibilities which causes role conflict and uncertainty (Mercer, 2009). There is often an expectation that the change process will give the organisation a competitive advantage (Pilbeam, 2006). However, to be successful, the change management process and the transition needs to be managed effectively; this requires investment in staff development, effective leadership and a supportive organisational culture (Bryman, 2009). It is acknowledged that successful implementation of change and building sustainability at times of complex change requires leaders who can inspire, communicate a vision and be positive role models (Gill, 2002; McRoy & Gibbs, 2009). Role models and anti-role models are highlighted in the literature as major influences in the socialisation of academic middle managers

and can contribute significantly to staff development, particularly in relation to developing values, skills and attitudes (Thomas-Gregory, 2014). Bourdieu refers to this form of socialisation as building a shared habitus and doxa of practice, whereby the individual is shaped by the field and the field in turn is shaped by habitus (Bourdieu, 1977; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Doxa is the cornerstone of habitus and how relationships are developed over time, to produce this shared vision and set of beliefs.

The literature claims that transformational leadership is required to enable change and support the socialisation of new staff and staff transitioning into new roles, it also aids the development of a positive organisational climate and culture (CIPD, 2017a; Cross & Carbery, 2016). Consequently, social capital accumulates, and a positive organisational climate and culture evolves. Change can be facilitated further by leaders undertaking an organisational development approach (Cross & Carbery, 2016). The literature points to action research as an intervention that can support organisational development and drive organisational change (Cross & Carbery, 2016). Utilising such approaches can enhance efficiency and aid sustainable change by developing team dynamics through working collaboratively to change organisational behaviour (Cross & Carbery, 2016).

A study by Taylor (2018) established a distributed development team in a North Wales HEI, in order to aid transformational leadership and facilitate organisational change. Kotter's (2014) model of a dual operating system moves away from a traditional hierarchal management system and supports small teams of interested volunteers to become a network of change agents who innovate change. The findings from Taylor's (2018) study found that the network members became visible as leaders of change, and there were greater opportunities for academics and professional services to collaboratively find solutions rather than working in silos. The unintended benefits of the study were increased levels of problem-solving, critical reflection and divergent thinking (Taylor, 2018).

2.6 Development of academic middle managers

There is an expectation that universities continually enhance the student experience, the quality of teaching and increase quality research outputs, alongside entrepreneurial activity such as developing and generating additional income revenues (Mercer, 2009). However, the literature suggests little consideration has been given to the organisational cultural and behaviour changes that are required to deliver these outputs or to the development needs of staff (Floyd & Dimmock, 2011; McRoy & Gibbs, 2009; Pilbeam, 2006; Thomas-Gregory, 2012). The literature points to staff development as essential for the implementation of organisational culture change (Bolden et al., 2012; Bolden et al., 2008; Bryman, 2009; McRoy & Gibbs, 2009). Studies suggest that to develop new ways of working, strategic reform and change culture are required.

Within the leadership and management of HE, the junior academic middle manager role is pivotal to the future succession planning of senior academic managers (Floyd, 2012, 2016). Mayo (2012) argues that valuing people with a focus on internal promotions and talent management is an approach that can be seen to value human capital. CIPD (2017a) claims that a one size fits all approach to staff development is archaic and staff development should be bespoke for each individual and unique to their role and their contribution to the organisation. It is crucial that job descriptions and appraisals are used by managers to aid staff development. Working more collaboratively with HR, and academic departments could enhance junior academic middle managers' staff development. Whitchurch (2008) undertook a study on the changing role of middle and senior managers in HE. Although her study focussed on professional managers rather than academic managers, the findings in relation to staff development can be applied across the disciplines. Whitchurch (2008) reasons that there needs to be a review of professional and academic managers' roles including how development needs are met and identities are defined. She suggests there needs to be a blurring of role boundaries in relation to management and leadership in HE.

A study undertaken by Thorpe & Garside (2017) claims that staff development for middle managers in HE can be supported by (co)meta-reflection. This is defined as "*a joint activity involving a deeper and more meaningful form of reflection involving two or more people seeking to develop the thought and practice of all participants by moving from descriptive to analytical levels of reflection"* (Thorpe & Garside, 2017, p.111). Bryman (2009) supports this notion by arguing that HEIs need to foster a collegial environment to give academics a voice in their organisation. Ellis and Taylor (CIPD, 2017b) advocate that when employees are given a voice, they are more creative, have enhanced decision-making and organisational trust which ultimately improves organisational behaviour and health and wellbeing.

It is also suggested that the use of (co)meta-reflection can support HEIs to meet the TEF metrics, which purport to enhance teaching and learning (OfS, 2018; Thorpe & Garside, 2017). There are particular challenges and tensions for academic middle managers during times of change and this can cause distrust and resistance. Mercer's (2009) longitudinal case study concludes that junior academic middle managers had similar tensions to academic middle managers and would benefit from comparable staff development opportunities. The findings from Mercer's (2009) study corroborated findings from an earlier study undertaken by Johnson (2002). Mercer's large study involved four pre- and post-1992 Universities and reported the findings from focus groups, semi-structured interviews and case studies. These findings endorsed that junior academic middle managers faced similar challenges such as excessive workload, complex competing demands and overload of administration tasks in their roles as HoDs. She concludes that increased administrative support should be available to junior academic middle managers to alleviate the challenges and tensions they face.

Both Mercer's (2009) study and Johnson's (2002) study recommended informal staff development with peers, workforce remodelling and dedicated administrative support to undertake low level administration duties in order to free up time for junior academic middle managers. Whitchurch (2008) supports better utilisation of professional services and recommends a more creative approach to HR practices

such as adapting job descriptions to encourage professional and academics middle managers' roles being unified. Creating opportunities for (co)meta-reflection in order to share knowledge and remove barriers may encourage a more fluid approach to changing roles and identities in HE. Turbulent changes and resistance can prevent organisations achieving their vision. Nevertheless, enhancing opportunities for employees to voice their concerns and engage in informal reflection with peers could be beneficial to the HE sector (CIPD, 2017b; Mercer, 2009).

It is acknowledged throughout the literature that academic middle managers and junior academic middle managers would benefit from developing informal networks to enhance problem-solving and decision-making skills to enable solution focussed approaches in a changing social world. The junior academic middle managers may not have had the opportunity to build their social capital and develop habitus in the changing field, which is negatively affecting their ability to function effectively. Bourdieu would argue that these deficits may be due to the social, political changes and neoliberal approaches applied to HE.

2.7 Summary

This chapter has critically reviewed the literature relating to academic managers working in HE, particularly in the context of professional education, social reforms and the dominant influential political drivers that concern this research. A rationale for the inclusion of a literature review has been given. Having considered the literature, this study embraces the concepts of situated learning, staff engagement and ownership to generate a positive organisational culture and climate. This can be realised by supporting, listening to and empowering staff to develop within their roles and embrace their current and future responsibilities. The outset literature review strengthened the research aim and objectives and enabled the CIG members to ensure that the study was focussed and connected to the literature.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter details the ontological, epistemological and methodological approaches underpinning this research study and describes how it evolved. The chapter also establishes the rationale and justification for choosing and using co-operative inquiry and introduces Bourdieu's conceptual framework in more detail. The concept of the insider researcher will also be explored. This study adopted an action research methodology; I was particularly drawn to co-operative inquiry as a method following a colleague's presentation at a research seminar (Whitney-Cooper, 2012). The notion that knowledge is socially constructed not acquired has a synergy with action research and practitioner generated knowledge. This made me consider co-operative inquiry as a potential method for my own research (McNiff, 2000; Trunk & Shapiro 2007). However, I needed to develop a deeper understanding of my personal philosophical stance to ensure the data collection, findings and theoretical framework were aligned. It is vital to ensure that there is congruence with the methodology and the researcher's ontological and epistemological stance before a decision is made to fully adopt an approach as a research methodology (Crotty, 1998).

It is important in the early stages of any research study for researchers to gain a greater knowledge and understanding of their values and beliefs in order to develop an underpinning philosophical and theoretical perspective (Crotty, 1998). McArdle (2004) suggests that utilising the guiding principles that underpin any given methodology will enhance understanding, although on reading the research methodology literature it became apparent that there is often ambiguity and conflict between authors (Carr, 2006; Somekh, 2006). In the beginning, this proved to be frustrating and confusing, and at times hindered my progress. On reflection I can see that this was part of my doctoral journey, forcing me to advance my own knowledge regarding philosophy and traditional research methodology and then apply this

knowledge to develop my own philosophy, particularly pertaining to co-operative inquiry.

To develop and successfully complete this research study, I have given in-depth consideration to the underpinning philosophical construct of my research study, including congruence with the intrinsic values of a professional doctorate. Carr (2006) supports this stance arguing that an action researcher should not feel obliged to import traditional methodologies, suggesting that an understanding of action research enables the researcher to justify and defend their philosophical position. Although I did grapple with this for a long time, on reflection the doctoral journey has developed my thinking to an extent that I had not fully anticipated at the commencement of this study.

3.2 Ontology

My ontological assumptions, as a set of beliefs have been influenced by my primary socialisation. My ontological beliefs are concerned with social reality and truth viewed from multiple realities and perspectives. These beliefs have been internalised during secondary socialisation throughout my career and are now embodied as my habitus as an academic, nurse and health visitor. As a researcher, the way you see the world is influenced by these deeply rooted ontological origins which ultimately effects the way the research is conducted and the findings are interpreted. This research study is situated in my employing organisation, and as an insider researcher, I bring experiential learning and tacit knowledge to the research (Coghlan, 2019). Considering Heron's (1996) notion of the human condition, I am aware my own personal and professional philosophy is inextricably linked to my habitus and practice and this stimulates my desire to research the lived experiences of colleagues in the social world.

3.3 Epistemology

From the onset of this study a priority was to develop my understanding of philosophical and epistemological approaches to research. I wanted to be able to

articulate and share my knowledge and experiences, whilst enabling the development of practice-based research. The work of Marshall (1999) was particularly influential and instrumental during this time, developing my ability to articulate my epistemological perspective that research should be a personal and a professional process and endeavour. Marshall (1999) argues that a researcher's epistemology should influence their everyday practice, knowledge and the social world they inhabit. This ideology is akin to my own epistemological beliefs and formed the mutual decision of the CIG members to incorporate Bourdieu's key concepts of habitus, capital and field as the conceptual framework for this co-operative inquiry.

The theoretical framework encompasses ontological, epistemological and methodological concepts that deliver a resulting method and acts as a valuable tool to explore both the research concepts and assumptions throughout the research process. Alongside the theoretical framework, the CIG decided to adopt Bourdieu's (1977) theory of practice as the conceptual framework, the rationale being that Bourdieu's theory of practice would aid the development and understanding of our social world which was fundamental to the research aim. Bourdieu identifies that an individual's behaviour incorporates influences from their primary and secondary socialisation including their background, upbringing and objective structures within society (Grenfell, 2012). Bourdieu's lens is, therefore, used to locate the study findings and resultant discussion in order to conceptualise and define the phenomena under investigation by exploring the interactions of individuals and groups in the social world.

Bourdieu's key concepts of field, capital and habitus are elaborated in more detail below.

3.3.1 Field

Field is conceptualised by Bourdieu (1977) as the space in the social world we inhabit as agents and function within. Field is often described as a series of structures and

institutions; the complex social world is made up of and created by many large fields such as education, employment, art, science and medicine. Bourdieu (1977) considers that people act in specific ways according to the unique rules of the field. Crucially fields are not static entities, rules change depending on the forces or power that challenge the boundaries of the field. Habitus and capital are interrelated with capital and field.

3.3.2 Capital

Capital can take many forms and represents the accumulation of resources gained throughout the life course which influences the position and power a person has in their field. Capital may be exchanged for status in the field (Bourdieu, 1977). Bourdieu (1977) divides capital into four distinct classifications of social, economic, cultural and symbolic. Economic capital is seen as the most significant, although, social, cultural and symbolic capital can be converted into economic capital. Habitus also has an impact on capital such as who your parents are, where you were born, and your education in the form of secondary socialisation also affects capital and habitus.

3.3.3 Habitus

Habitus is conceptualised by Bourdieu as the structuring of an individual's past and present, and this ultimately shapes the individual's present and future practice. This socialisation is influenced by principles, traditions and customs that form the social world in which we live and work. Bourdieu considers habitus to work in conjunction with capital and it is suggested that these are internally regulated.

3.4 Research paradigms

The philosophical approach or paradigm is the foundation of any research study; the researcher needs to have a basic set of beliefs that guides the research into action (Crotty, 1998; Guba, 1990; Guba & Lincoln, 1994: Weaver & Olson, 2006). Robson (1993) describes a paradigm as the researcher's world view on the complexities that exist in the real world, which respond to basic philosophical questions, a viewpoint

reinforced and well documented within the literature (Bryman, 2008; Crotty, 1998; Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Reason & Bradbury, 2001). Guba and Lincoln (1994) perceive different paradigms as being characterised by their disparate responses to ontological, epistemological and methodological questions. However, caution is advised because the researcher's stance can only be accepted on face value (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). However, philosophical paradigms can be regarded as a continuum; it is essential that the researcher identifies and gives consideration to the philosophical approach or approaches that will guide their study.

The four main research paradigms of positivism, post-positivism, critical theory and constructivism were all explored and considered in relation to the ontological, epistemological and methodological stance of this research study (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Heron & Reason, 1997). After consideration, Guba and Lincoln (1994) made the most consistent influential and articulate contribution to the sometimes confusing and conflicting debate regarding research paradigms. The work of Mertens (2010) and Heron and Reason (1997) have contributed further to my understanding, particularly within the arena of participatory and transformative paradigms.

3.5 The chosen research paradigms

As humans we have a need to obtain knowledge and the four main paradigms all interpret phenomena differently (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Heron & Reason, 1997) with no one paradigm monopolising the production of knowledge (Heron, 1996; Heron & Reason, 1997). Although a dominant paradigm usually emerges, this occurs once the researcher has decided what information is required and how the study will be undertaken (Bryman, 2008; Parahoo, 2006). The most appropriate paradigm depends on the philosophy of the researcher (Bryman, 2008; Crotty, 1998). My overall decision to use specific paradigms was ultimately based on the nature of the research aim and objectives (Crotty, 1998; Mertens, 2009, 2010).

The philosophy of this study is aligned with the critical theory and constructivist paradigms as critical theory is concerned with the critique of society aiming to

explore social life and human assumptions of how the world is constructed. Constructivism is concerned with how individuals construct reality which is determined by individual experiences. Trunk and Shapiro (2007) argue that a central element to action research is the construction of knowledge, which is acquired by interaction in the social world. This study involves seeking a collaborative understanding of a phenomenon which relates to judgements, perceptions and feelings in a practice setting, incorporating situational tacit knowledge in which discovery and action are crucial elements of inquiry. I believe I have found a theoretical perspective that supports my epistemological beliefs regarding knowledge and knowledge generation. My personal philosophy is similar to Marshall (2016) in that I believe research should be a personal and a professional process and journey. In everyday practice, I constantly challenge myself, reflect and take action to make changes and improvements to my practice. I therefore, needed to work with a methodology that enabled the research to be a continuation of my underpinning ontological and epistemological philosophy.

Using a paradigm should be seen as advantageous, to ensure philosophical and ontological congruity of the research study (Crotty, 1998). However, as a researcher it is essential to ensure that the research aim, paradigms and method are also epistemologically and ontologically integrated. The reasoning for choosing these philosophical perspectives is that ideas and practices should be judged in terms of their usefulness, workability, practicality and social construction. For this study these are the criteria of truth, rightness and ethical values. I am aware that a philosophy should be viewed as a continuum rather than an opposing philosophical standpoint (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2008). The benefits of keeping an open philosophical perspective is well recognised in the action research literature (Heron, 1996; Heron & Reason, 1997; Reason, 2006). It is imperative that the focus of the action research should be paramount, because the research runs parallel with the researcher's work, and this allows ownership of the research design and process as it proceeds (Williamson et al., 2012; Wisker, 2008). Prevailing thinking generally emphasises the synergy between the paradigms rather than the conflict that may exist between the paradigms (Heron & Reason, 1997).

The very nature of action research is that it is an approach that does not use accepted principles of traditional research methodologies, such as reliability and validity (Williamson et al., 2012), but is an investment in real world practice by embedding learning to make and enable real benefits in the social world (Saunders et al., 2008; Wisker, 2008). However, it is recommended that a theoretical framework is developed and maintained throughout the research study (Wisker, 2008) to successfully navigate the research process (Crotty, 1998). I have outlined the principles of the chosen paradigms and justified my choice for this research study.

3.5.1 Critical theory paradigm

Critical theory is associated with and was developed in Frankfurt, Germany, in the 1920s. It is thought to encompass a set of alternative paradigms, including neo Marxism, feminism, queer theory, action research and participative enquiry (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Mertens, 2009, 2010; Williamson, Bellman, & Webster, 2012). Mertens (2010) relabelled critical theory as the 'Transformative Paradigm', the rationale for this was that individuals have often been marginalised throughout history and research. Mertens argues this theoretical perspective gives a voice, to researchers and participants by enabling them to work together for personal and social transformation. The epistemological basis of critical theory or the transformational paradigm assumes a transactional and subjectivist relationship between the researcher and the subject, which are inextricably linked (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Mertens, 2009, 2010). This paradigm accepts that the values of the researcher influence the research process and that the findings are value mediated. This paradigm was considered appropriate for this enquiry; the ontological stance would incorporate the political and social factors impacting on junior academic middle managers in HE and also give recognition of the subjective nature of the phenomenon.

3.5.2 Constructivism

Constructivism is a paradigm that is guided by the basic assumption that knowledge is socially constructed and represents an alternative paradigm to positivism and post-positivism (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Mertens, 2010). The constructivist paradigm emphasises researcher understanding of the complexities of the lived experience (Mertens, 2010). Constructivist research is a product of the researcher's own values and therefore the researcher cannot be objective. The ontological basis of constructivism is that multiple realities exist, which are constructed by individuals, in time and place; although, it is recognised that conflict may occur (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Mertens, 2010). Reality is, therefore, relative and is created by individuals, and reconstructed through communication and interpretation (Guba, 1990; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Constructivism is deemed as relevant to this study's aim and objectives and Bourdieu's theory of practice. The epistemological perspective within constructivism is that the researcher and respondent identify and construct knowledge by means of conversations, debate and interpretation. This is pertinent to this study, because the constructivist paradigm recognises the subjective nature of the phenomenon under investigation and the relationship between the researcher and the co-researchers and the field in which they are positioned.

3.5.3 Participatory paradigm

Heron and Reason (1997) argue the participatory paradigm, is a major challenge to traditional research paradigms. This paradigm involves a commitment to a collaborative process and a participatory world view that is orientated to social change (Kindon, Pain, & Kesby, 2007). The ontology of the participatory paradigm is to enable participants to take action that will improve the quality of their practice and enhance the human condition, (Heron & Reason, 1997). The participatory paradigm is believed to be valuable in supporting 'human flourishing' (Reason & Bradbury, 2001). The co-operative inquiry is a variant of action research and is conceived as an end in itself as it balances between, and within, an encounter by producing co-operation and autonomy for those involved (Heron & Reason, 1997; Williamson et al., 2012). The shift in relationship between researcher and researched

is a key element in the participatory paradigm which Heron & Reason (2001) argue is so prominent it almost makes researcher and researched archaic terminology, muddling the boundaries between the two roles. The participatory paradigm is not without controversy with some suggesting that it is potentially a new paradigm that does not subscribe to the world view of traditional research methodologies (Heron & Reason, 1997; Williamson et al., 2012). The participatory paradigm was also deemed appropriate for this research study with its emphasis on action and practical knowing.

The adopted approach and the paradigms of critical theory and constructivism enabled the exploration of the social world making sense of the complexity of the junior academic middle managers' roles. This is congruent with the research aim which is to gain an in-depth understanding of the personal and staff development needs of junior academic middle managers in a FHSC during a period of organisational change.

The chosen paradigms are also congruent to achieving the research objectives:

1. To identify the junior academic middle managers perceptions of their personal and staff development needs in a FHSC.
2. To create opportunities for collaborative reflection and peer support to enhance academic support and professional development for junior academic middle managers during organisational change.
3. To consider and critically appraise the theoretical and practice-based literature in relation to the findings of the study through the lens of Bourdieu's theory of practice.

3.6 Insider researcher

Undertaking research within your own organisation can be both complex and insightful and it provides an opportunity to engage with an area of interest that triggers the insider researcher's imagination (Coghlan, 2019). As an insider researcher I was cognisant of the unique position I was in, which is reported as

enhancing the research study (Coghlan, 2019; Costley, Elliot & Gibbs, 2010). Nevertheless, being an insider researcher is not without its challenges; insider researchers are often criticised for the over-simplification of complex issues within organisations (Costley, et al., 2010). I was attentive to not oversimplify the issues within the FHSC. It is suggested that over-simplification of the phenomena being researched may be due to pre-understanding and/or role duality (Coghlan, 2019). I was cognisant of my own pre-understanding, which is considered as the knowledge and insider information the insider researcher has developed from the theoretical understanding of their lived experience and knowledge of the organisational dynamics. Another central consideration for insider researchers is role duality which Coghlan (2019) describes as the organisational and researcher roles the insider researcher juggles when undertaking research within their employing organisation. It is suggested that these multiple roles within the organisation or role duality can cause conflict at times; as the insider researcher I needed to give consideration to how I managed my preconceived assumptions, the politics and power issues, and engaged in the research process from an ethical standpoint (Mercer, 2007). The literature on insider research explores the notion of a complete member role, when a member of an organisation undertakes research and plans to remain in a similar capacity when the research is completed (Adler & Adler, 1987; Coghlan, 2019). This was particularly pertinent to me because I had recently become a HoD and planned to remain in the organisation. Mercer (2007) claims there is an insider/outsider dichotomy, and researchers are essentially on a continuum, moving between insider and outsider whilst still integrated in the research process.

The insider researcher has the advantage of understanding the organisation from not only their perspective, but also through access to internal data and colleagues working in the organisation this can lead to understanding in use rather than reconstructing understanding (Coghlan, 2019; Costley et al., 2010). As a consequence of being an insider researcher I had the opportunity to become part of the social process, enabling the integration of learning and the development of new insights within the organisation (Coghlan, 2019; Costley et al., 2010). Conversely, critics of such an approach consider it to be subjective and lacking in impartiality,

potentially leading to researcher bias (Costley et al., 2010; Saidin & Yaacob, 2017). As a novice researcher I was cognisant of the challenges of being an insider researcher such as role duality and pre -understanding and how these may influence the study. However, because I was undertaking a professional doctorate that focusses on generating mode two knowledge derived from practice to facilitate change, influence and impact on practice, I embraced my insider researcher status (Coghlan, 2007; Hessels & Harro van, 2008; Fulton, Kuit, Sanders, & Smith, 2012). I kept a reflective journal throughout the doctoral journey in order to evidence my mode two knowledge, through this, I documented the generation of new knowledge and the novel approach I took to change my practice (Fulton, et al., 2012). However, as a researcher with intimate knowledge of the organisational dynamics, power and politics I could also be considered to be in the swampy lowlands (Coghlan, 2019; Costley et al., 2010; Saidin & Yaacob, 2017; Schön, 1983). *"The swampy lowlands, where situations are confusing messes incapable of technical solution and usually involve problems of greatest human concern"* (Schön 1983, p. 42).

The swampy lowlands in Bourdieusian terms could be viewed as the field, with the researcher developing an understanding of the rules of the game whilst developing habitus and accumulating capital in a new field of practice. Schön's (1995) analogy of the 'swampy lowlands' considers that integration of scholarship in practice is challenging; as a novice researcher I grappled with the complexity and messiness of the organisational problems I was confronted with. Fulton et al. (2012) argue that these challenges are integral to the development of mode two knowledge and professional doctorate study. It is suggested that an insider researcher should be objective when collecting data and reporting the findings whilst also appreciating the benefits of pre-understanding. I found this a difficult notion to manage during this research study (Coghlan, 2019; Costley et al., 2010). However, it could be argued that objectivity is the goal of the positivist researcher; bias is a positivist criterion that qualitative researchers need to reframe as prior knowledge, expertise and interpretation.

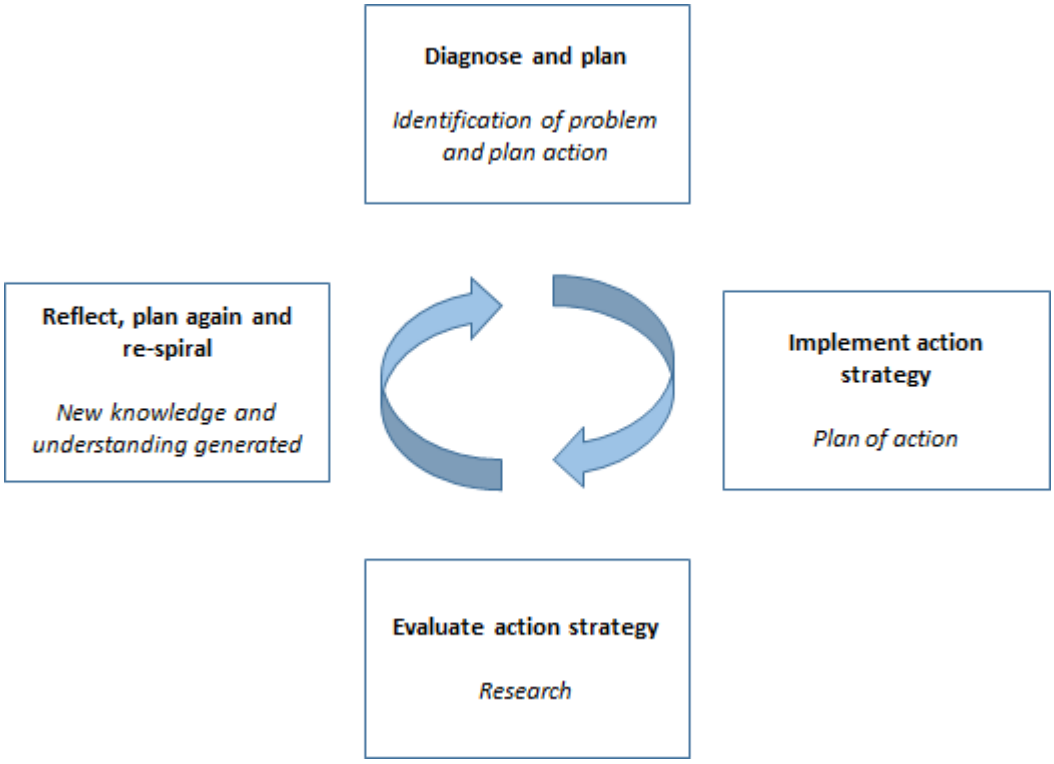
3.7 Action research

3.7.1 Development of action research

The development of action research is also worthy of discussion in this chapter to gain a greater understanding of how action research has developed and become a reliable methodology in more recent times. Carr (2006) suggests that the history of action research is divided into two distinct periods. Firstly, the period between the 1920s and 1950s when there was a growing interest in the United States of America (USA) in how to apply scientific methods to study social and education problems. During this time Kurt Lewin was a key figure and coined the phrase action research, though in the 1950s action research was rejected in the USA mainly due to the lack of empirical generalisability.

Action research became disregarded due to its inability to meet methodological requirements and conform to positivist insistence. However, in the UK in the 1970s there was a re-appearance of action research due to mounting opinion regarding the irrelevance of traditional methodologies in educational research (Carr, 2006; Elliott, 1991). It was during this time that there was a re-emergence of Lewin's action research, to enable teachers to make changes by testing innovative curriculum and improving pedagogical practice (Elliott, 1998). Utilising this methodology, which has its origins in educational research, feels appropriate and pertinent as a researcher. Action research is often described as cyclical. The diagram depicted in Figure 5, which is adapted from Lewin (1946), demonstrates the cycle in a simplistic format, but the four principles are often recycled during different phases or cycles of the research.

Figure 5: Action research spiral framework



(Adapted from Lewin, 1946)

The process of action research is dynamic, enabling co-researchers to gain a deeper understanding of their practice (Riel, 2010). I quickly realised the complexity of real problems and issues that action researchers face and the iterative nature and messiness of action research (Mellor, 2007). The literature presents a myriad of definitions of action research. From my perspective, for this research study I find that Carr and Kemmis (1986) provide a classic definition:

> *Action research is simply a form of self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own practices, their understanding of these practices, and the situations in which these practices are carried out* (p.162).

This notion of action research is linked closely with education and the work of Schön (1983) in which action research is firmly located in practice and embedded in self-

reflection to ultimately enhance the practitioner's practice. However, Bogdan and Biklen (1992) state that practitioners undertaking action research systematically collect data that can be employed in order to recommend change in practice, thereby bringing about collective transformation. This has resonance with this action research study and the ethos of a professional doctorate, making it a sound choice of methodology for me as a practitioner researcher. Action research is traditionally embedded in social psychology; it is an emergent process closely aligned to social interaction and learning by doing (Lewin, 1946). Lewin is reported to have criticised his contemporaries for separating research from practice (Williamson et al., 2012). The concept of praxis is defined as intellectual and practical engagement or the process in which theory and practice inform each other. However, praxis can also mean making visible and acting upon one's values (Williamson et al., 2012).*"Action research is a process by which change is achieved and new knowledge about a situation is generated"* (Williamson et al., 2012, p.7).

There is no one universally accepted definition of action research. Reason and Bradbury (2001) suggest that action research is an approach rather than a methodology, stating that action research consists of a 'family of approaches'; the approaches have different orientations and key characteristics which seek to involve, empower and improve aspects of the social world. Carr and Kemmis (1986, p.164.) in their seminal work support this concept, believed that action research includes the following principles:

- Participatory in character;
- Democratic impulse;
- Simultaneous contribution to social science (knowledge) and social change (practice).

Meyer (2000) illustrates how these three principles can be practically applied to this research study, suggesting that participation requires the co-researchers to be willing to play an active part in the action research study. Democratic impulse necessitates that the participants are and are seen to be equals in the research study. The third

principle is akin to the ambition of the professional doctorate programme, to develop and contribute to practice-based knowledge. This is a central characteristic of this research study. It is acknowledged that when generating practice-based knowledge practitioners often need to rely on tacit knowledge, because theoretical knowledge does not always fit with the uniqueness of the action researcher's situation (Carr & Kemmis, 1986; Meyer, 2000). However, in choosing action research I was confronted with a wide-ranging and perplexing collection of activities and methods. As discussed earlier, the nature and emphasis of the degree of democratic impulse (participation), the change intervention (action), and how this generates knowledge (Coghlan & Brannick, 2010) are fundamental principles that build on the decision to adopt action research. Action research is, by its nature, an iterative process, and this is what initially attracted me to this methodology for this study. Action research is research in action rather than on action. It is a collaborative democratic process (Coghlan & Brannick, 2010; Williamson et al., 2012) and develops practical knowledge, by combining action with reflection and the underpinning theory (Reason & Bradbury, 2001). The participation with others was central to this research study, and it was essential for me to choose a methodology that involved other members of the FHSC.

3.8 Method

This section outlines how we chose the method and adopted co-operative inquiry. Co-operative inquiry is defined as a collaborative method with others who wish to gain a better understanding of their situation and take action for change to ultimately transform practice (Reason & Heron, 1999). Another significant constituent of co-operative inquiry is that the research is with people who have similar concerns and issues rather than on people. The CIG was made up of eleven members, who wanted to explore their staff development needs and ultimately make changes to their practice as middle managers within the FHSC.

Utilising a collaborative method establishes commitment to developing actionable knowledge in a democratic process, which can be both facilitative and empowering to participants (Winter & Munn-Giddings, 2002). As previously discussed, this holistic

approach has specific theoretical stages and cycles and practical action elements. Co-operative inquiry involves a process whereby participants undertake mutually decided actions as part of the development of the inquiry, which in itself is a form of intervention. Co-operative inquiry is an open process; it is about discovery and learning, not about confirming or validating previous theories or hypothesis (Heron 1996; Heron & Reason, 1997).

It is suggested that this method allows the researcher to participate in the inquiry as a co-participant enabling the research to benefit from being deep-rooted in the real lived experience (McIntosh, 2010; McNiff, 2000; Williamson et al., 2012). From a personal perspective, it was about making sense of the knowledge within practice by utilising interpretation, critical reflection and contemplation, which can ultimately influence strategic decision-making and develop new ways of working (Bray, Lee, Smith & Yorks, 2000; McIntosh, 2010). The research study used co-operative inquiry to explore and identify the junior academic middle managers' developmental needs and increased their understanding of how change affects their identity and roles within the FHSC. Alongside co-operative enquiry the notion of utilising a conceptual framework evolved during the research process. As mentioned earlier the CIG members explored and discarded communities of practice as a conceptual framework (Lave & Wenger, 1991) as they did not believe that communities of practice addressed the complexity of the phenomena being explored. Bourdieu's 'thinking tools' served to highlight the complexity of the junior academic middle managers development needs resulting from policy reforms. Adopting Bourdieu's lens as a conceptual framework was considered to be a way of developing critical insight into the phenomena under study. Thus, enabling the CIG members to better understand the organisational climate and culture they were operating in.

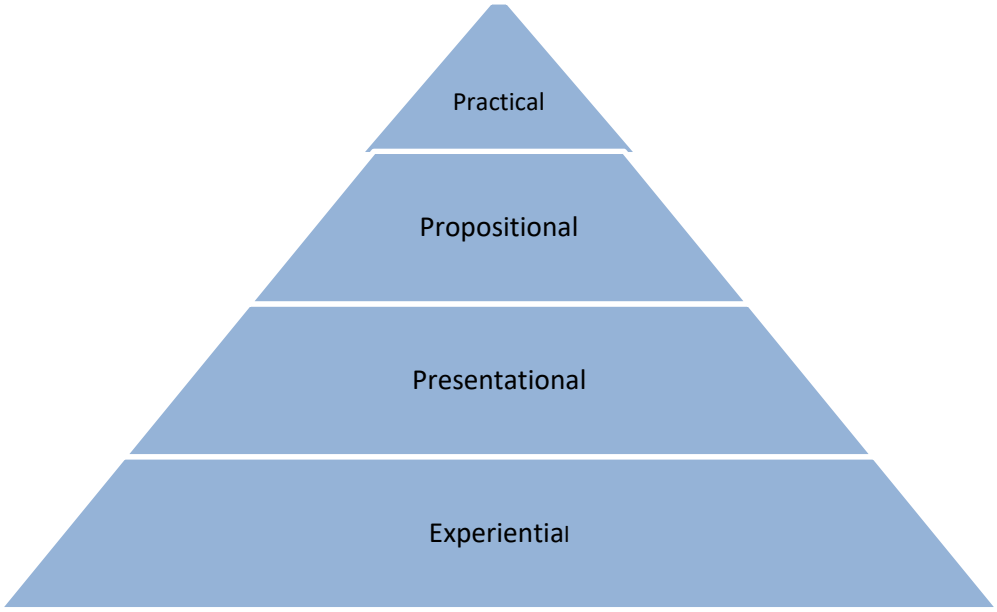
Employing a co-operative inquiry method demonstrated a commitment to the co-production of knowledge through a collaborative process, thus empowering the participants to develop work-based skills that can influence the organisational culture and transcend organisational boundaries (Fulton, et al., 2012; Winter & Munn-Giddings, 2002). Using co-operative inquiry also allowed me to be a co-subject

and participant in the research study. This changed my worldview and enabled me to make an ongoing contribution to my practice by reflecting in action and creating changes during the research study (Fulton, et al., 2012). Collectively, the CIG generated the development of new insights and the construction of new knowledge via the meetings; the collaborative arrangement gave the CIG members confidence and impetus to be change agents (McNiff, 2000). It is acknowledged that reflection, learning and change are central to co-operative inquiry, initially issues may not have been obvious, yet through careful group facilitation the issues faced by the CIG members came to light, were examined and debated and the necessary actions were taken (Coghlan & Brannick, 2014). The use of a collaborative and democratic strategy facilitated the ownership of the issues or problems we were encountering in everyday practice. The CIG approach supported the junior academic middle managers during the turbulent times of organisational change and provided the opportunity to make distinct contributions to the organisational behaviour and culture (Cross & Carbery, 2016; Fulton, et al., 2012).

Traditionally, research is validated on propositional knowledge which has a bias towards intellectual knowledge and is based on the rules of logic and evidence, with the researcher as the expert. Heron (1996) argues a more holistic approach to research is required. He contends that co-operative inquiry is based on an interdependence between propositional knowledge and practical knowledge which is about knowing how to perform a skill. The nature of professional doctorates and action research embraces Heron's holistic approach. The notion of the interdependence of propositional and practical knowledge, resonates with this study because reflection and collaboration are central to co-operative inquiry. I believe that in order to facilitate change, interdependence of propositional knowledge and practical knowing is crucial. Co-operative inquiry also recognises the importance of experiential knowledge and feeling the presence of people, places, energies or processes. Heron (1996) expands on this by asserting these four types of knowledge make up a systemic whole based on a pyramid of up-hierarchy, which is depicted in Figure 6. The research cycling of co-operative inquiry creates four different types of knowledge and also contributes to actionable knowledge in terms of mode two

research (Coghlan, 2007; Hessels & Harro van, 2008; MacLean, MacIntosh, & Grant, 2002).

Figure 6: The pyramid of fourfold knowledge (Heron, 1996 p.53)



It is central to this research study to acknowledge that co-operative inquiry uses an iterative action research inquiry cycle that has four phases of knowing which includes reflection, action and back to reflection. Heron (1996) asserts that belief comes before knowledge and research cycling converts belief into knowledge:

1. Diagnosis: Researcher and co-researchers identify the problem and method of inquiry (propositional and presentational belief and knowledge);
2. Planning: Exploring how to solve the problems (data collection, practical belief and knowledge);
3. Implementing: Putting the solutions into action (fully immersed in data collection, experiential belief and knowledge);
4. Evaluating: Seeing if the solutions were successful (second reflection stage, propositional belief and knowledge.

The research study's aim was to gain an in-depth understanding of the personal and staff development needs of junior academic middle managers in a FHSC during a period of change. I was aware that this was an ambitious aim, particularly with the

impetus of change within the NHS and HE. In addition, the nature of the Faculty's organisational structure had altered, and the external organisations were in a period of flux. The Faculty is viewed as influential and is respected externally by practice partners; also, anecdotally the Faculty is seen as powerful within the University. From a Bourdieusian viewpoint it could be considered that the FHSC has accumulated economic capital in the University and therefore has a dominant and powerful position (Grenfell & James, 1998). It is well documented that power and position affects the way in which we comprehend and function in the social world (Coghlan & Brannick, 2005). Nevertheless, I was confident that utilising participatory and constructivist paradigms in combination was the best way forward. The location of this study within these two paradigms (Reason & Bradbury, 2001) emphasises the importance of collaboration and democracy within co-operative inquiry (Hope & Waterman, 2003). Consequently, the study has real world-validity.

Participatory ontology empowers participants to embrace learning in-action in order to enhance and advance their situation. This approach contributes to the ethical values of the research aim and objectives and is valuable in terms of "human flourishing" for the CIG members (Reason & Bradbury, 2001, p.1). The co-operative inquiry method is regarded as an end in itself because it provides equilibrium by producing co-operation and autonomy for the junior academic middle managers involved in the research study (Reason & Bradbury, 2001). Creating a space for critical discourse for the junior academic middle managers was an important aspect of the research study because I wanted to develop opportunities for a collective voice to enable change and empower the junior academic middle managers to share knowledge and contribute to a change in practice. Baldwin (2001) concurs that co-operative inquiry is the method of choice that provides ownership of learning in an organisation, it is also a supportive method to promote changes in practice and behaviour. This is reinforced further by Heron & Reason (2001) who state that the utilisation of co-operative inquiry is not only informative but is transformative, thus facilitating changes in complex organisations (Baldwin, 2001).

Nevertheless, it should be recognised that empowerment in a co-operative inquiry study is dependent upon CIG members' full involvement in designing the research, interpreting the data and analysing the findings. By undertaking co-operative inquiry and including and valuing colleagues, I believe I have demonstrated commitment to collaboration and democracy throughout this research study. This commitment to inclusivity in research is often missing in traditional methodology. A co-operative inquiry approach endeavours to combine the role of researcher and co-researchers. The purpose of the CIG was, therefore, to generate a democratic process that was in the spirit of co-operative inquiry and congruent with the aim and objectives of this study.

3.9 Ethical considerations

3.9.1 Introduction

The purpose of this section is to discuss the ethical considerations of undertaking research with humans and debate the concept of insider-outsider collaboration whilst also considering researcher power.

3.9.2 Approval and context of an insider research study

For this co-operative inquiry study, I was granted ethical approval from the FHSC's Research Ethics Sub-Committee. This approval included consent from the Executive Dean to access the co-researchers who were Faculty staff. Ethical approval was also sought and granted from the Faculty of Business and Management where the Doctorate of Professional Studies programme was located. Furthermore, as an action researcher undertaking a study in my own organisation, I needed to consider two further ethical concerns, the position of power and ownership of the research (Bellman, 2012).

The principles of governance and ethical considerations were followed throughout the entire research process to safeguard and protect participants' rights and dignity

(Beauchamp & Childress, 2001; Polit & Hungler, 1999). The four basic principles adopted throughout were:

1. Respect for autonomy
2. Justice
3. Beneficence
4. Non-maleficence.

Participants have the right to decide whether or not to take part in any research and to withdraw without any fear of reprisal. The CIG members were given an information sheet and asked to sign a consent form at the beginning of the study (Appendices 1 & 2). There is much debate in the literature regrading informed consent, particularly related to action research, which suggests that informed consent is a difficult concept due to the emergent nature of action research (Williamson et al., 2012; Williamson & Prosser, 2002). Consequently, participants were advised that they may withdraw from any part of the study, without giving a reason, at any time up until the thesis was written. The CIG meetings were transcribed, and the CIG members were assured that the transcripts were kept in a secure place, which was locked, and all names and roles were anonymised at the data analysis stage so they would not be identifiable (Appendix 2). Although the study did not target participation from vulnerable groups, it is crucial to ensure justice is central throughout any study. As a HoD, this was particularly significant in terms of issues of power and the potential of unequal power and coercion within the study these issues are addressed below. There was no anticipated immediate gain for the participants involved in the study, although it was envisaged that their participation would aid their learning; in addition, the research could potentially enhance their employing organisation.

However, as staff development needs were explored and actions taken to promote and facilitate staff development, participants voiced a gain in terms of having a supportive peer group to aid induction into their new roles. It is also pertinent to

report that two colleagues who were CIG members have recently successfully submitted doctorate theses. They commenced their doctoral studies during this research study and were active members of the CIG and their research ideas and progression was potentially borne from the CIG. The benefits of this study and the knowledge gained has therefore not only influenced and changed my practice, but also the practice of other CIG members, ultimately enhancing the existing body of knowledge and organisation. A key strength of co-operative inquiry is the collaborative nature and 'closeness' of the methodology, although this can also be problematic (Coghlan & Brannick, 2010; Reason, 2006). Researchers must ensure no harm is done to any participants.

This research was undertaken in my own organisation, which could be viewed as a traditionally hierarchical environment. It is recognised that insider research can cause tensions and conflict between the organisational trajectory and agendas and the study recommendations. However, by demonstrating trustworthiness, honesty, transparency and reciprocity with CIG members, I believe this was effectively managed throughout the study (Bellman, 2012; Williamson et al., 2012). It is crucial that any claims made by a research study are authentic, dependable and trustworthy.

The interpretive nature of action research and qualitative data analysis means this can be fraught with difficulties (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Hammersley, 2007). I adapted the framework in Table 1 in an attempt to ensure quality and validity throughout the study; the framework applies four criteria (Levin, 2003).

Table 1: Framework for quality and validity

Criteria	Evidence in relation to study
1. Participation (with and for people rather than on people)	Co-operative inquiry is a participatory form of inquiry, based on the values of democracy
2. Real life problems (grounded in real- life practice)	The Faculty was in a period of transition, with new roles and responsibilities impacting junior academic middle managers' development requirements. Co-operative inquiry is governed by constant and iterative reflection; the research is worthwhile and practical.
3. Joint meaning of construction (draws on a wide range of knowing)	Co-operative inquiry is a participatory form of inquiry and data were collated from across the Faculty and interpreted, generating understanding and many ways of knowing.
4. Workable outcomes (being worthy, emerging, new and enduring)	The outcomes should be significant and sustainable; outcomes have already been incorporated into the organisation. The research is developmental and emergent.

(Adapted from Coghlan & Brannick, 2010; Levin, 2003; Reason, 2006)

It is essential to set clear boundaries at the beginning and throughout the study. Due to the emergent nature of co-operative inquiry, it is problematic to predict the political and ethical exposure that may occur during the study. I was fully cognisant of my responsibility as the principal researcher to protect and safeguard co-researchers from any potential harm as a result of the data and findings presented in the thesis. All data were treated in the strictest confidence and not used for any other purpose and will be destroyed after ten years in accordance with the University of Chester policy (2019) and Data Protection Act [DPA], (2018).

3.10 Co-operative inquiry

3.10.1 Introduction

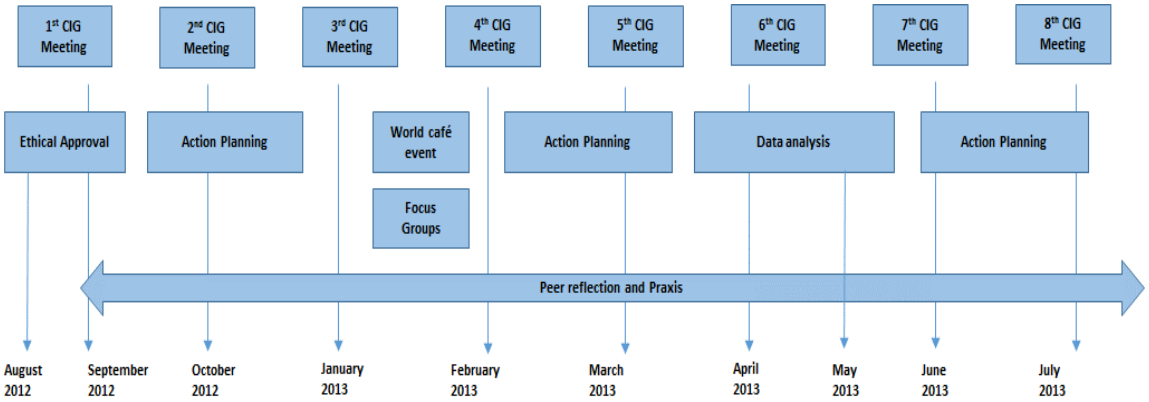
This section discusses co-operative inquiry as a method and the four stages previously described by Heron (1996). Heron suggests each stage has particular phases, stage one is the beginning of the iterative cycle which commences with the inaugural meeting of the co-researchers, stages two and three are the data collection and action phases with stage four is described as the second reflection phase which promotes the continuing development of the inquiry method. In the spirit of co-

operative inquiry, the journey is documented including how the co-researchers developed a collaborative proposal, agreed the data collection methods and employed the conceptual framework.

3.10.2 Timeline for study

Following ethical approval, the research study took place over a nine-month period. The first two CIG meetings were stage one, where the CIG entered the diagnosis phase to aid identification of the practice problem. This diagnosis phase involved exploring and planning how the group could solve the issues raised. At these diagnosis and planning stages the CIG members agreed to have a world café event, which incorporated focus groups with invited FHSC staff. The world café was stage two and three of Heron's co-operative inquiry cycle. These phases were implemented to gain a greater understanding of the internal ethos and organisational culture of the FHSC. Following the world café event, the CIG members entered stage four and spent the next CIG meetings analysing data and reflecting on the data from the focus group notes (FGN), which will be discussed in greater detail in the findings chapter. Throughout the entire timeline (Figure 7) the CIG members were engaged with cyclical problem-solving, action planning and intellectual and practical engagement.

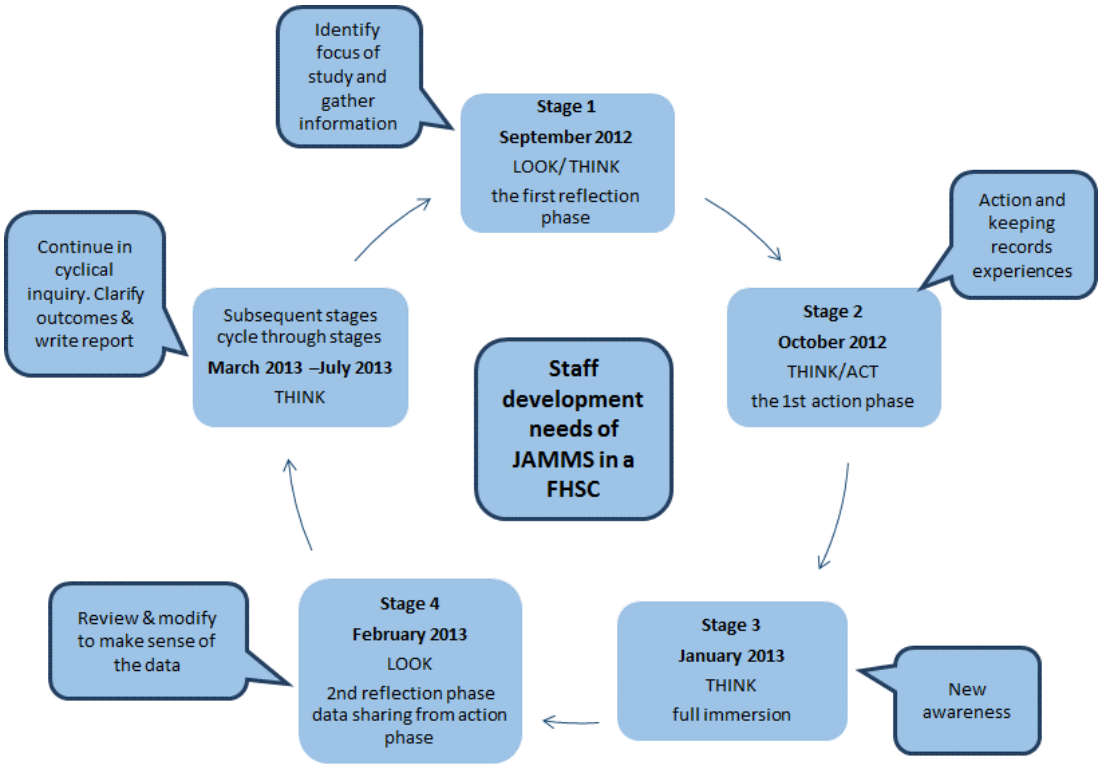
Figure 7: Timeline for study



3.10.3 Initiating the inquiry

The CIG convened following an 'initiators call' from myself as principal researcher. The invitation was sent via email to the Deputy Heads of Department and Faculty Co-ordinators who were the junior academic middle managers within the Faculty. They were asked to join the CIG meeting following ethical and access approval. The invitations were sent out to all of the junior academic middle managers in the case FHSC, all of whom accepted the invitation, agreeing they would like to be involved with the study. Although this was a purposive sample, the spread of the staff involved was far-reaching across all Departments in the Faculty. It included the Deputy Heads and Faculty co-ordinators and resulted in a CIG consisting of eleven members, including myself. It was accepted that all CIG members would not be able to attend every meeting, there was a minimum of five members at each meeting. Mead (2001) set eligibility criteria based on grade and rank in his study, yet still held the fundamental principle of self-selection. This was not feasible for this research study as involvement was on a voluntary basis. The overarching aim was to gain an in-depth understanding of the personal and staff development needs of junior academic middle managers in a FHSC during a period of change therefore self-selection was inappropriate. Heron (1996) describes the four stages of the co-operative inquiry cycle, which I have combined with Stringer's model of action research (2014) in Figure 8 to demonstrate the cyclical stages and actions that the CIG undertook. I found it beneficial to employ a combination of Heron's (1996) stages and Stringer's (2014) model of action research. Following the adapted models in Figure 8 I was reassured and more confident that I was indeed undertaking research. It is argued in the action research literature that action research is everyday practice (Meyer & Cooper, 2015). However, Stringer argues the difference between everyday practice and action research is a *"systematic and rigorous inquiry or investigation that enables people to understand the nature of problematic events or phenomena"* (Stringer, 1999 p. 5).

Figure 8: The cyclical stages and actions that the CIG undertook adapted from Heron (1996) and Stringer (2014)



The action research cycle, as depicted in Figure 8, started with the diagnosis of the perceptions and issues. I found incorporating Stringer's (2014) and Heron's (1996) models into one framework also enhanced the CIG members' understanding of the co-operative inquiry process and I was able to demonstrate the cyclical stages and actions we were undertaking during the research study. The CIG members reported that they felt there were particular central issues that needed detailed examination to move the research study forward. This was achieved by the CIG group moving through each stage and phase to gain an understanding of our practice and the complexity of our work environment. We wanted to improve our practice, and this was achieved by having reflective discussions, developing concept maps, writing personal reflective accounts and maintaining field notes.

3.10.4 Stage one diagnosis phase

Heron (1996) describes setting up and initiating the research study as stage one in the inquiry cycle. At the first meeting there were eleven members present. I delivered a PowerPoint explaining the philosophy of co-operative inquiry as a method. Heron (1996) advocates that the first meeting should incorporate three crucial elements, which are interrelated. Firstly, initiation of the co-researchers so that they make it their own; secondly, promotion of joint decision-making and true collaboration; and thirdly the creation of an open sharing climate. I therefore explained the philosophy of the CIG and we discussed my preliminary thoughts for the inquiry. The CIG members debated how the group would function and how often we would meet; we reached a consensus during the first meeting to meet monthly, in a building away from the FHSC and all CIG members agreed the initial ground rules, that members:

1. contribute by presenting their own perceptions and reflections;
2. be respectful of other members within the group;
3. undertake any actions agreed by the group;
4. contribute and supply feedback to inform the views of the group;
5. be respectful of the democracy and confidentiality of the CIG.

At the first meeting the main issues we debated and critically reflected on were informed consent and how the data would be shared with others not engaged with the study. The issues that were highlighted were partially addressed by setting the ground rules outlined above, these were mutually decided and agreed by all the members of the CIG. The act of setting ground rules could be likened to Aristotle's practical ethics of phronesis, the wisdom of truth and to behave right employing both speech and language with sagacity, signifying that ethics emerge through human engagement (Nugus, Greenfield, Travaglia & Braithwaite, 2012). Aristotle (as cited in Taylor, 2016) stated that as humans we become ethical through practice, co-operative deliberation and negotiation. As an insider researcher I was mindful of the challenges of undertaking action research in my own organisation (Coghlan 2019; Saidin & Yaacob, 2017; Costley, et al., 2010). With the emergent nature of co-

operative inquiry there can be difficulties with consent relating to what the CIG members are consenting to. Therefore, we agreed at the beginning of every CIG meeting that the issue of informed consent would be revisited. All decisions were taken together as part of the collaborative journey and in keeping with the inquiry method, which seeks to promote collaboration and political process in an organisation (Reason & Heron, 1995).

As previously discussed the CIG members wanted to make sense of their social world, and we agreed we would use Bourdieu's theory of practice (1977). Through collaboration and reflective conversations, the CIG members had disregarded an array of philosophical perspectives. Following further debate, it was collectively agreed that Bourdieu's thinking tools were indeed a useful framework to explore and further develop our understanding. Bourdieu's emphasis on practice and his consideration of the impact of neoliberalist policy on health and social care and HE had resonance with the research aim and enable us to seek solutions to the practice dilemmas.

My motivations for the research study were shared with the CIG and crucially we agreed that each member of the CIG had their own motivations, which were also shared with the CIG. This openness of the group was both interesting and stimulating for me as a researcher, confirming that it was the correct decision to undertake a collaborative study. It is recognised that mutual interaction between co-researchers is fundamental to co-operative inquiry in order to enhance the experience of the research participants (Nugus et al., 2012; Williamson et al., 2012). Therefore, ensuring a democratic process was central to the CIG success, this was a challenging aspect of the study. Being a novice action researcher, HoD, and insider researcher, at times may have impacted negatively upon the democratic process. Initially, there was a tendency for me to take charge and I had to be mindful of the need to promote democratic practice within the CIG and work in collaboration to ensure the CIG members were given a voice.

I believed that a formalised approach to staff development using co-operative inquiry would be beneficial for the junior academic middle managers and the organisation. It is acknowledged that co-operative inquiry is a form of self-reflective practice, which can help co-researchers find solutions to everyday practice issues (McNiff et al., 2002) and supporting the junior academic middle managers in the dynamic and evolving environment. Throughout the research study it was crucial to be mindful of the power dynamics that could be challenging for the CIG members. It could be argued that being an insider researcher is a powerful position which may be destabilising for the study philosophy of democracy (Harrison & Bradling, 2010). I sought advice from the literature regarding the most effective approach to take. It states that setting ground rules, being open, transparent and honest is the most effective approach to diminish the power of the insider researcher (Coghlan, 2019; Costley et al., 2010). A collegiate approach, suggests Costley et al.(2010) will allay the anxieties of CIG members and set the foundation for the future CIG meetings.

As a researcher it was important to demonstrate a full awareness of the reasons for the choices I had made whilst maintaining transparency throughout the research study (Reason, 2006). As the instigator of the research project it was crucial to be open, transparent and respectful of the other CIG members involved in the study. I believe this approach developed a sense of ownership for the CIG members. As the instigator of the CIG, I became protective of the CIG members, this is recognised as a feature of insider research, which may occur when conducting research inside your own organisation (Floyd & Linet, 2010). Mercer (2007) highlights that the power imbalance exists for the insider researcher, which can be problematic particularly if the researcher is in a senior position in the organisation. I was cognisant of my powerful position as a member of Faculty Management Group (FMG) with a direct reporting mechanism to senior managers. In an attempt to reduce the issue of power imbalance I always ensured that any data or information was agreed prior to sharing with FMG. This information sharing role was a privileged one, with a responsibility to share relevant information that was gathered from the CIG. It could be considered that the shared frames of reference and mutual respect aided the collegiality of the CIG. Floyd & Linet (2010) support this concept, they suggest that the benefits of

insider research outweigh the challenges, if appropriately managed and the complex ethical issues are given consideration.

The validity of this type of inquiry may be strengthened further through participation in an 'open boundary feedback' *(*Heron, 1996). An open boundary provides wider participation with the real world, particularly during the action phases, this was achieved by engaging with the wider FHSC staff who provided feedback to the CIG (Heron, 1996; Heron & Reason, 2001). The CIG members agreed to share data from others in their Departments and we also agreed to use the data from the world café event, which was attended by members of the Faculty staff. The CIG members were all involved at various levels within the FHSC and had a variety of roles and remits, which aided the shared experiences and perceptions within the CIG. This resulted in in-depth insight of the issues and challenges that we were facing as a group and as individuals.

3.10.5 Stage two and three data collection and action phases

Data collection in co-operative inquiry is also the action phase which is a systematic and dynamic process. Data collection for this study was not a one-time snapshot of data but involved multiple data collection points. As such, the data sources were far-ranging and broad, requiring grouping into specific data categories. The data sources are outlined, were collated and reviewed during the eight CIG meetings to aid the analysis, interpret the data and make decisions for the way forward. Inclusiveness of other FHSC members was enabled by an open boundary approach, these took the form of informal or spontaneous interviews, also known as collegial conversations or experience sharing.

This tactic of wider engagement with the FHSC staff provided tentative validation of the findings and enabled the CIG members to confirm consensus without violating the co-operative inquiry process. This engagement came in the form of CIG members' feedback resulting from their everyday exposure with colleagues in the FHSC, and commentary from Faculty staff who attended the world café event.

It is proposed that the validity of the research can be enhanced further by repeating the cycling within the research study (Heron & Reason, 2001). Repeated research cycling was incorporated throughout each phase of the study, which is an accepted approach within co-operative inquiry (Heron, 1996; Reason, 1999, 2006).

Co-operative inquiry is a person-centred approach, which enables researchers and participants to develop a participative relationship instead of undertaking the traditional roles within a research study (Heron, 1996; Heron & Reason, 1997). The participative relationship develops throughout the co-operative inquiry process; I was conscious that development of this participative relationship required nurturing and facilitating. All members needed to contribute, although each individual had their own motivation to be an active member (Carr, 2006). Good research is about people using creative action to address issues that are important to them, and not just about producing academic papers and books (Reason, 1999).

Table 2 demonstrates the co-operative cycles of reflection and action and the data that was included throughout this research study.

Table 2: Cycles and data included throughout this research study

Timeframe of study	Stages of reflection and action	Data collected
1st CIG Meeting September 2012	Stage one shared underpinning philosophy and project proposal Management of CIG Establishment of group and ground rules	Concept mapping Field notes Reflective journal
2nd CIG October 2012	Stages two and three action planning and data analysis Review job descriptions of junior academic middle managers and analysis in relation to the study Scope staff development opportunities in FHSC Review staff development days Planning world café event	Concept mapping Field notes Reflective journal Archival data
3rd CIG January 2013	Stage three action planning World café event Focus group meetings CIG members facilitated groups	Focus group notes Concept mapping Field notes Reflective journal
4th CIG February 2013	Stage four second reflection on study phase, future action planning focused on the following: Staff days enhancement Development of mentorship for new academics	Concept mapping Field notes Reflective journal
5th CIG March 2013	Stage three action planning	Field notes Reflective journal Focus group notes Concept mapping Archival data
6th CIG April 2013	Stage three action planning Transformation and data analysis	Field notes Reflective journal Focus group notes Concept mapping Archival data
7th CIG June 2013	Stage four second reflection on data analysis of all data sources for triangulation and emerging themes	Field notes Reflective journal Focus group notes Concept mapping Archival data
8th CIG July 2013	Stage four second reflection Development of themes and future action planning	Field notes Reflective journal Focus group notes Concept mapping Archival data
September 2013 Individual Meetings with CIG members	Major reflection phase Member checking individually	Field notes Reflective journal Concept mapping
February 2019 Meeting with CIG members	Post-group collaboration Sharing findings and results and provisional recommendations made in thesis	Field notes Reflective journal Concept mapping

Co-operative inquiry is a holistic approach with theoretical stages and cycles and practical action elements. It is suggested that this research method encourages the

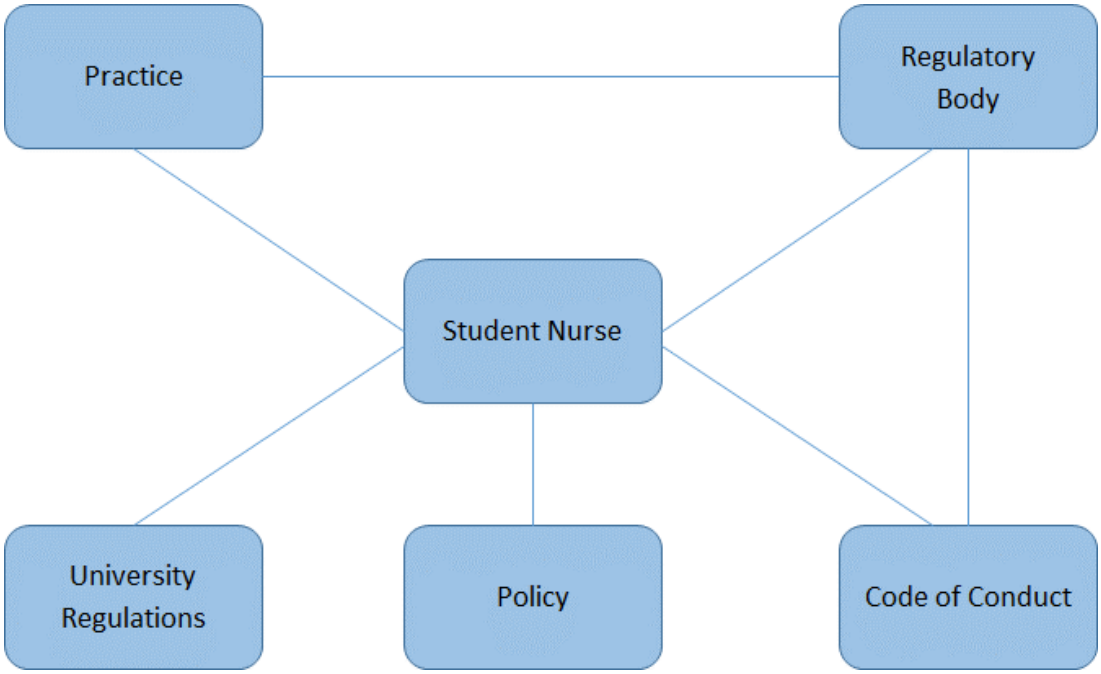
researcher to participate in the inquiry as a co-participant and enables the research to be derived from a real lived experience (McIntosh, 2010; McNiff, 2000; Williamson et al., 2012). Co-operative inquiry involves a process in which participants undertake mutually decided actions as part of the development of the inquiry, which in itself is a form of intervention. Co-operative inquiry is an open process; it is about discovery and learning, not about confirming or validating previous theories or hypothesis. From a personal perspective, it was about making sense of the power dynamics and culture within my own practice by utilising experiential data. This involved interpretation, critical reflection and contemplation and enabled me to influence strategic decision-making and develop new ways of working (Bray et al., 2000; McIntosh, 2010). At times I found the concept of the participative relationship a challenge, which triggered conflict with my role of HoD. This conflict to my identity as a co-researcher and co-subject could be viewed as a change in habitus. I discussed this conflict with my supervisory team and the CIG membership to seek support and guidance. It was essential to be aware that organisational culture and politics can influence and impact upon the CIG whilst undertaking a research study, and it is crucial to provide opportunities to reflect and develop strategies to support the research process (Coghlan & Brannick, 2014).

3.10.6 Concept mapping

The development of concept maps captured the emerging data and acted as a visual 'aid-memoire'. This additional way of capturing data were undertaken following each CIG meeting and provided a creative and visual method to make sense of the complexity of the inquiry (Conceição, Samuel & Yelich Biniecki, 2017). I found utilising researcher-generated concept mapping was advantageous in building confidence as a novice researcher. By visually shaping ideas and understanding, I was creating a visual image of the themes and abstract ideas over the period of the study (Conceição et al., 2017; Meagher-Stewart, Solberg, Warner, MacDonald, McPherson. & Seaman, 2012). A focussed approach to tease out the themes as they emerged during the CIG meetings aided the action planning that is required in co-operative inquiry. Sharing the concept maps with the group following each CIG

meeting provided a visual summary, developed new insights, and extrapolated the emerging themes for use in planning future actions for the study. Figure 9 depicts a fictitious concept map of the type that aided the CIG's understanding of the complexity of their social world.

Figure 9: Example of a concept map



The validity of the generated themes was agreed through the CIG and this ensured that the findings had resonance with the CIG's perceptions, beliefs and values. Following shared analysis, the CIG members agreed actions which were reported on during the following CIG meeting.

A verbal report was also given to the CIG members regarding progress to date and the emerging themes being generated; this gave the CIG the opportunity to reflect on the latest actions or inputs, making any changes. This process was employed to ensure that the research study had validity. To confirm that junior academic middle managers did not feel obliged to participate in this process, an explicit verbal consent was sought before using any of the information as data

3.10.7 Field notes

Another data collection method was field notes. The decision was made not to audio record the initial meeting, to ensure this was a collaborative decision for future meetings; in the spirit of co-operative inquiry the CIG members' opinions on this decision were sought. The unanimous decision was that a recording was not required because it may prevent open and honest discussion within the group. In hindsight it may have been useful to capture some of the emerging data, because it was difficult to be a facilitator of the CIG, a participant of the ongoing research, and the note-taker. This may be a limitation to the study and was not always practicable. I did have other CIG members who also undertook the facilitator and note-taker roles. However, most of the other CIG members were generally content to leave the record keeping to me. For future research the issue of assigning roles at the beginning will be considered.

Although this is not an unusual occurrence in co-operative inquiry, it is suggested, where feasible, that co-researchers should be encouraged to contribute, although it is still often left to the initiator of the group to take the lead role (Tee, Lathlean, Herbert, Coldham, East & Johnson, 2007). In the absence of a digital recording, field notes became crucial, in conjunction with concept mapping, they acted as an 'aide-memoire' to discussions and provided the necessary focus for the research study. Field notes were prepared at the end of each meeting and were circulated to the other co-researchers by email prior to the next meeting. The other CIG members commented, suggested alterations, and any changes were made and emailed prior to the next CIG meeting. This process proved to be effective and had the advantage that the email discussions kept the research study alive in-between the CIG meetings and the research at the forefront of everyday practice.

3.10.8 Stage four second reflection phase

During the initial CIG meeting a template for reflection was shared, which I used for my own reflections throughout the study. This second reflective phase of the inquiry provided contextual data and supplemented the CIG field notes. Although the group

agreed to keep a reflective journal throughout the study, these were not shared with me, despite me asking for CIG members' reflections to be shared at each CIG. However, as the group developed and matured, the CIG members shared their reflections verbally and explored their thoughts and reflections during the CIG meetings. This enabled the group to develop a sense of shared habitus, which ultimately established trust and safety in the CIG. This reflective commentary is included in the CIG field notes and conceptual mapping. A personal reflective journal was maintained, and this data is incorporated in the findings of this thesis. My reflective philosophy is also central to the research study, I believe that reflective practice is transformational, and I incorporate reflection in my everyday practice. However, interaction with colleagues in the workplace offers opportunities to influence change, transforming everyday practice and creating organisational change and impact. This is congruent with my rationale to undertake a professional doctorate programme; I wanted to embed innovation, have an impact and transform my professional practice. As a developing researcher the CIG decision to adopt Bourdieu's key concepts of habitus, capital and field transformed my praxis and phronesis to facilitate my professional learning and development.

3.10.9 Stages two and three repeated

The CIG members decided through a process of discussion and shared reflective conversations that we needed an event to engage with the entire FHSC staff, including academics and administrators; this developed into the most significant action taken by the CIG. This demonstrates Heron's notion of the process of recycling that occurs during co-operative inquiry. The CIG's initiative to host a world café event was designed to gain a wider understanding of Faculty staff's perceptions of their roles and responsibilities in the FHSC and in the University. Approval was granted by the FMG to access all staff because it was anticipated that this event would inform the CIG of the internal influences and organisational culture that the junior academic middle managers were operating in. The CIG members believed they had a good understanding of the external influences and drivers. However, due to the diversity of FHSC Departments, sites and the FHSC position in the University it was envisaged

that further internal investigation would increase understanding of the complexity of practice and their working environment.

A world café event was seen as the most beneficial approach for gathering data for the study in that it provided a relaxed conversational process to engage in constructive dialogue with FHSC staff (Steier, Brown & Mesquita da Silva, 2015). From a methodological perspective the world café is considered by Tan & Brown (2005) to be a sound data collection method. Tan and Brown (2005) state that the world café method can assist groups of any size to nurture collective situated learning whilst building relationships and bond understanding. Such an approach is reported to appreciate collective intelligence, situated knowledge and seek possibilities for future action planning, which is consistent with the philosophy of action research (Tan & Brown, 2005). The philosophy is, therefore, one of developing collective knowing (Steier et al., 2015). It was anticipated that there would be cross pollination through constructive dialogue, which would provide rich conversations interrelated with practical knowledge in a relaxed collegiate environment (Reason & Bradbury, 2001; Steier et al., 2015; Tan & Brown, 2005). Bourdieu (1977) claims respecting individual habitus promotes a shared doxa of practice, which recognises the field as complex with many players, all of whom have a position and a part to play.

The world café event consisted of four focus groups (FG) in separate rooms external to the Faculty sites, it was believed by the CIG members this would encourage FHSC staff to attend and share their perceptions. People self-selected to each FG, and attendance was on a voluntary basis. The café was designed to share the knowledge and ideas of Faculty staff interested in the phenomena being researched. Again, it was decided not to audio record the FG, the CIG members agreed to transcribe focus group notes (FGN) and staff were asked to use 'post-it notes' to share their perceptions using set questions as a guide.

The CIG developed the following questions because it was agreed we needed a semi-structured format to help gain a deeper understanding of the Faculty staff's

perceptions, whilst still being fluid enough to enable participants to explore their lived experience:

1. What is your perception of your role in the University?
2. What is your perception of your role in the Faculty?
3. What is your understanding of the responsibilities of academics and administrators?
4. What are your personal and professional development needs as a member of the Faculty of Health and Social Care staff ?

Fourteen members of FHSC staff attended the world café event, ten were academic staff and four were administrators. The data from the FGs were used to concentrate the subsequent CIG meeting discussions and have been included in the findings chapter of this thesis. The world café enabled the CIG to gain a better understanding of the Faculty staff's perceptions and provided rich reflective discussions for the junior academic middle managers, which led to iterative cycles of reflection and action planning to inform the wider context of junior academic middle manager staff development in the Faculty.

3.11 Data analysis

This section reflects on the process of data analysis that took place during the lifetime of this study. In the spirit of co-operative inquiry, the CIG critically reflected on the collated data at each meeting. Data analysis informed the ongoing deliberations of the CIG through the various stages of this study. The data collection and analysis were simultaneous, although for the purposes of this thesis I have reported the analysis separately to aid the reader. The data set in Table 3 was analysed by the CIG members, themes were identified, described, shaped and reshaped as the data accumulated during the period of the study.

Table 3: Dataset included in research study

Data Type	Source	Abbreviation
Internal FHSC level data	Job description Faculty Coordinator	JD1
	Job description Deputy Head of Department	JD2
	Staff Day Evaluations 2012	SDE12
	Staff Day Evaluations 2013	SDE13
CIG Data	Field notes	FN
	Reflective journal	RJ
	CIG meetings	CIG
	Concept maps	CM
	World café focus group notes	FGN

The CIG members analysed the data throughout the CIG meetings. I endeavoured to ensure that all participants had access to the data prior to the CIG meetings so they could make suggestions and comment via email and were still engaged with the study if they were unable to attend the CIG meeting. This strategy was used to ensure that the data analysis was not dominated by any one CIG member and all CIG members had the opportunity to countribute to the data.

The data analysis was immediate, and contributions were included at every iteration during the research study. The utilisation of concept maps aided the analysis of the data and allowed for the emerging themes to be established after interpretation of the raw data and for the junior academic middle managers to reflect on their individual development needs. Table 4 demonstrates the phases and process undertaken during data analysis throughout this research study.

Table 4: The six phases of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006)

Phase	Description of process
1. Familarising yourself with your data	Transcribing data (if necessary) reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas.
2. Generating initial codes	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.
3. Searching for themes	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.
4. Reviewing themes	Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic 'concept map' of the analysis.
5. Defining and naming themes	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
6. Producing the report	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis to the research aim and questions and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

The CIG met monthly to continuously review the data and discuss the concept maps, critically reflecting and discussing the interpretation of the findings. The research process in co-operative inquiry is iterative, with the data analysis and findings informing the continuous development of the study. This interpretative journey enabled meanings and understandings to be reached in order for actions to be decided and agreed for the future CIG meetings (Steen & Roberts, 2011). Analysis throughout the study needed to be continuous to ensure an understanding was developed to progress through the stages of co-operative inquiry, thus aiding the formulation of joint actions for future meetings.

I wanted to engage all of the CIG members in the data analysis, yet some of the CIG members were reluctant to engage in the full process outside of the CIG meetings but were keen to discuss and debate the analysis at each meeting or by email conversations. Acknowledgement is given here that this was an important aspect of the research process because raw data can be seen as silent, and it is the analysis and interpretation that enables the teasing out of the hidden messages within the data (Robson, 1993). Once the themes were finalised, I met with each member of the CIG

individually to review the data and the themes generated, this is considered as member checking or participant validation (Bryman, 2008). It is important to have an awareness of reflexivity, participant validation and engagement with the co-researchers, because being an insider researcher and in a position of power may influence the data analysis and the interpretations made (Coghlan, 2007; Mercer, 2007).

3.12 Summary

This chapter has considered the theoretical framework including the underpinning ontology, epistemology, methodology and methods of this research study. The rationale and justification for adopting action research as a methodology and co-operative inquiry as a method has been given. The collaborative decision to adopt Bourdieu's conceptual framework has been discussed in relation to the theoretical framework. The concept of the insider researcher in relation to this study has been considered and debated.

Chapter 4: Findings

4.1 Introduction

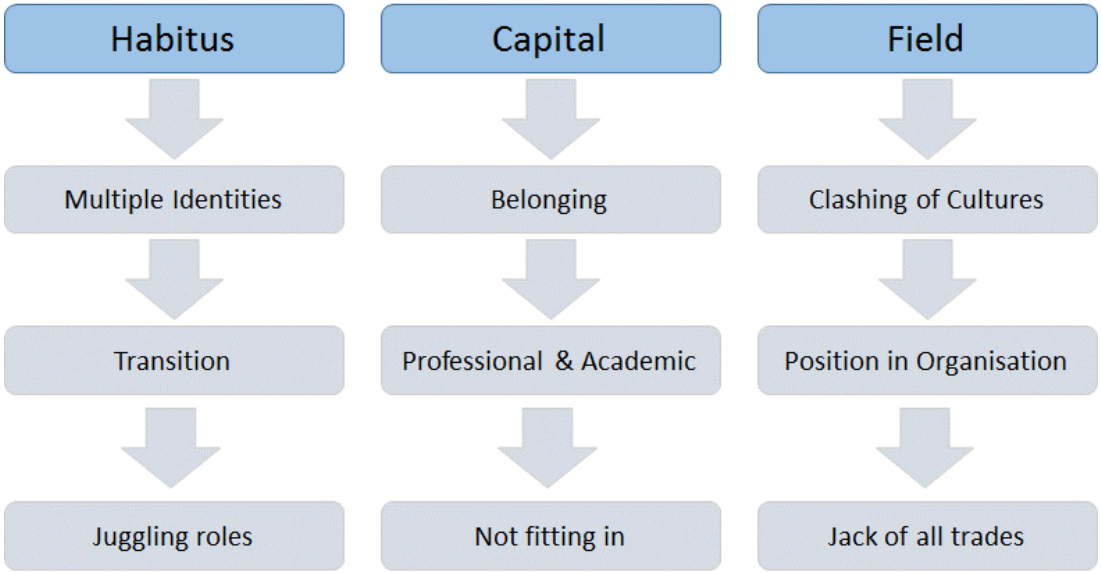
This chapter is written as two distinct sections and presents the first and second-order outcomes of this research study, in keeping with co-operative inquiry method. The aim of this study was to explore the staff development needs of junior academic middle managers in a FHSC at a time of change. When using the co-operative inquiry method, it is recommended in the literature that the researcher makes it clear that there are two different research outcomes. Heron (1996) describes these as first-order outcomes or meta outcomes and second-order outcomes and argues that it is vital to understand when undertaking a co-operative inquiry study, that the second-order outcomes are equally important as the first-order outcomes. *"Co-operative inquirers are engaged in two simultaneous inquiries. There is the first-order inquiry that focusses on the chosen topic and there is the second-order inquiry that is about the whole business of doing co-operative inquiry"* (Heron, 1996, p.110).

Heron (1996) describes the second-order outcomes as a result of learning-in-action. Heron does not differentiate between outcomes in a hierarchical way and finds it frustrating when second-order outcomes are disregarded by researchers (Heron, 1996). As a consequence, he recommends that both first and second-order outcomes are presented to demonstrate their interdependence and the iterative nature of research and learning.

As discussed previously Braun & Clarke's (2006) data analysis framework was adopted for the analysis stage. The data collection and analysis was undertaken simultaneously throughout this research study in collaboration. This approach is common in co-operative inquiry, and as a CIG we engaged collaboratively throughout the study. However, during the final data analysis stage there was a tendency for other CIG members to avoid the final data analysis and encourage me to take the lead role. Although this was frustrating at the time I believe that this allowed the crystalisation of the findings and my ownership of the final thesis.

To provide structure and aid analysis the CIG mutually agreed, Bourdieu's theory of practice was adopted as the conceptual framework to present the findings of this study. This was believed to be the most appropriate approach, as the themes of Bourdieu's (1977) key concepts emerged strongly during the data analysis. The superordinate themes are therefore presented as Bourdieu's key concepts of habitus, capital and field. Additional subordinate themes were identified and are depicted in Figure 10, which presents the superordinate and subordinate themes.

Figure 10: Superordinate and subordinate themes



Habitus, field and capital are theoretical concepts which Bourdieu refers to as 'thinking tools'. These aided the interpretation of emerging data and enabled the CIG members to make sense of the findings (Bourdieu, 1977, 1990; Maton, 2012). It is important to be cognisant that these concepts are interwoven throughout the evolving research study; from a Bourdieusian perspective the key concepts are interrelated enabling us to make sense of the complex social world we live in.

Throughout this chapter, vignettes and extracts from direct quotations have been used to capture the key concepts from the CIG members and the documentary data, this also establishes transparency to demonstrate the trustworthiness and rigour of the research study. Vignettes have been included as a way to describe and analyse the actions, learning and behaviours of the group in relation to the data themes.

4.2 Habitus

Figure 11: Key concept and sub themes

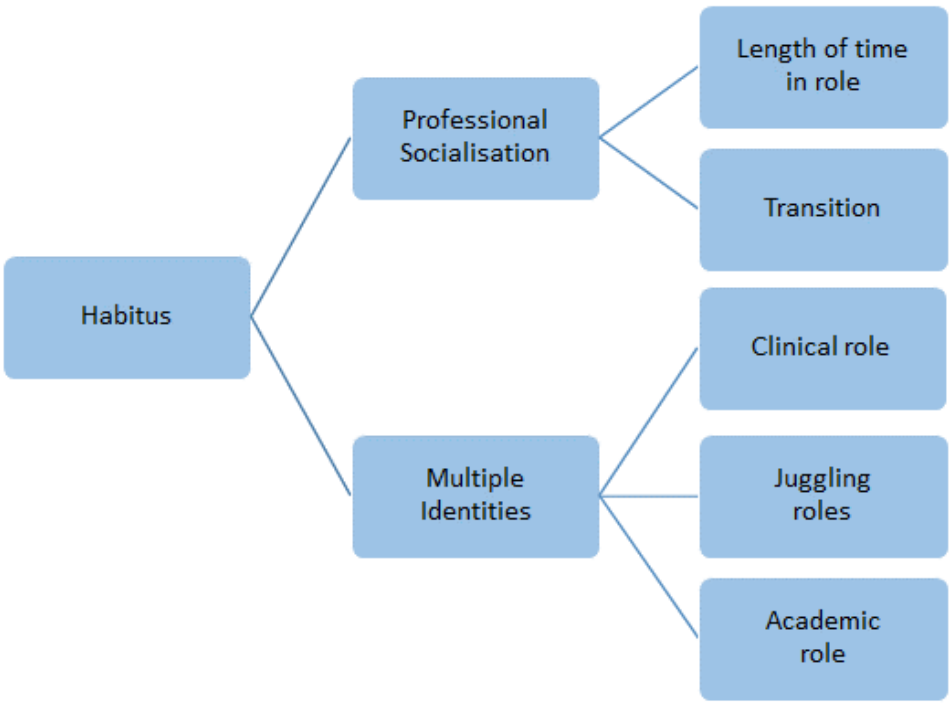


Figure 11 demonstrates the concepts and themes that emerged from the collaborative data analysis. The CIG members considered habitus to be the superordinate overarching theme, drawing together the complexity of the practice environment. Notions of habitus and being a professional was a central construct of the junior academic middle managers' multiple identities.

The following vignette (Figure 12), describes what happened during stage one of the cyclical inquiry. The CIG members initially explored and debated the junior academic middle managers' job descriptions these revealed the essential criteria, which included integration of the multiple roles of professional, academic, teacher and manager.

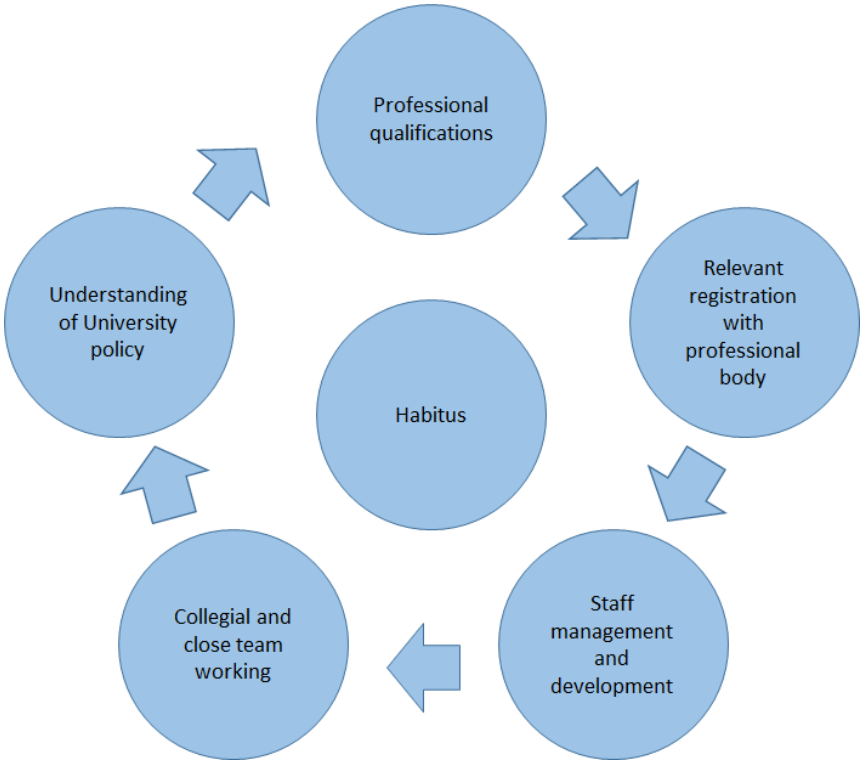
Figure 12: Vignette from the second CIG meeting

At the second CIG meeting during the action planning phase, the CIG members agreed one of the first actions following the inaugural CIG meeting was to review the junior academic middle managers job descriptions. The action commenced with individuals reviewing their own job description, the CIG then shared their initial thoughts and explored the emerging themes. We had a reflective discussion about how our previous roles in practice may influence our current roles in HE. One member who is a midwife stated that although they had been working in HE for a number of years they still felt their identity was formed by their professional socialisation and this continues to influence their academic role. As we shared our stories, many of the CIG members agreed with these observations and the emerging themes from the CIG discussions warranted further analysis. As a result, the CIG members debated the notion of professional identity and the importance of secondary socialisation within healthcare practitioners' transition into HE. It was mutually agreed it would be advantageous for the CIG to explore this further and we would review the literature regarding health care practitioners' transition into HE. A CIG member shared a story of attending a conference a few years ago where Professor Gary Rolfe presented a lecture on nurses in academia and how he felt they needed to stop apologising for being nurses and embrace their roles in academia. The CIG members debated this perception and concluded that as a collective in HE this resonated with them, it was agreed a CIG member would undertake a literature review prior to the next meeting.

The following diagram in Figure 13, demonstrates the process undertaken by the co-researchers to explore the key themes from the job descriptions. This induced a dialogue of the high expectations of the junior academic middle manager role and the complexity of the role. Consequently, it was discussed by the CIG members that it was evident that there was a requirement for the junior academic middle managers to be competent across a variety of roles, which required a habitus that spanned across two diverse organisations: the FHSC and professional practice. Through an ongoing process of negotiation and reflection, the concept of multiple identities, was explored. The challenges and complexity of developing a shared habitus were

revisited and debated throughout the research study as the CIG members continually reflected on the multidimensional nature of their professional roles.

Figure 13: Themes from job descriptions



Prior to the next CIG meeting the key themes from the literature review were shared by email with the CIG membership. Some of the CIG members also shared reflective conversations over coffee breaks and during Faculty and department meetings. Figure 14 encapsulates the discussion from the third CIG meeting.

Figure 14: Vignette from the third CIG meeting

At the third CIG meeting during the action planning phase, the CIG members continued the discussion regarding the literature review themes. The focus of the discussion was the negative perceptions some nurses had shared about their transition into academia. This ensued into further dialogue regarding professional socialisation and identity. The use of conceptual frameworks were also discussed during this meeting. This was particularly focussed on Lave and Wenger's communities of practice and Bourdieu's key concepts were prevalent in the related

literature. An area of particular interest was the notion of how secondary socialisation may influence professional identity and transition. The CIG members agreed a conceptual framework could support us to explore the phenomena to explore if secondary socialisation can directly impact upon healthcare professionals and academics. During this CIG meeting we reflected on our own experiences and decided Bourdieu's thinking tools could support the CIG members to develop a greater insight and understanding of how our experiences in practice have shaped us and contributed to the development of our habitus and a shared doxa. The CIG members reported they were excited to learn together and they relished the opportunity to share the co-operative inquiry journey with their colleagues.

Following much debate, the CIG undertook a breakdown of each CIG members' professional role which included the length of time qualified as a professional and the year the junior academic middle manager commenced an academic role in HE and their current FHSC role. The CIG members comprised of ten females and one male member there were seven adult nurses, one dual registered child and adult nurse, two midwives and one social worker. The period of time in the junior academic middle manager role varied from six years to three months. Following analysis of the demographic data, it became apparent that the length of time in the role was an important feature which warranted further exploration by the CIG members. This is not surprising when considered in terms of habitus formation and the length of time needed to integrate in a new social field. It was evident from the CIG reflective conversations that some of the newly appointed junior academic middle managers perceived they were unsupported in their role initially and this had a negative impact on their perceived effectiveness in their role.

Professional identity is inextricably linked to habitus and the findings suggest that novice junior academic middle managers had not fully transitioned into academia, instead their habitus was dominated by their previous professional roles. The novice junior academic middle managers had not had time to build accumulated capital in the new social field and as a result they voiced particular challenges such as coping

with juggling their multiple roles in an increasingly complex environment. Reflective discussions regarding identity were revisited in the CIG meetings indicating the significance of this concept for the junior academic middle managers. A number of the junior academic middle managers reported difficulty balancing the multiple nature of their professional identities such as professional, academic and middle manager. In terms of transition into academia, when viewed through Bourdieu's lens, the individual's habitus shapes their perceptions and worldview, and how they behave in their field and practice. The junior academic middle managers dominant habitus was that of practitioner and as a result they struggled to enact the new multiple identities expected of them. Bourdieu considers the development of habitus to be formed in childhood as primary socialisation; habitus is established through the history of the individual and the embodiment of social structures, which are established as a set of dispositions which are internally regulated (Grenfell & James, 1998). Secondary habitus is developed and shaped through education and professional roles, and for some of the junior academic middle managers it is this secondary habitus that is still under development.

Habitus built over many years of professional practice was firmly embedded constituting their notion of self. The data established that the various professional and academic roles, such as those of 'being a teacher' and 'being a practitioner' influenced the everyday practice of the junior academic middle manager. Their identity as a professional first and foremost meant that at times the junior academic middle managers' habitus was dislocated from the social field it now occupied.

"*What do we perceive the CIG members roles to be?"* (Jenni)

Sue started the conversation with the extract below.

"I still see my role as a practitioner, when I introduce myself to lay people, I'll say oh I'm a nurse, but I now teach, I am a nurse lecturer at the University". (Sue)

Sue suggested at the first CIG meeting that she believes there were multiple identities within the junior academic middle manager role; Sue described herself as a nurse initially, promptly adding that she teaches at the University. Sue identified two specific roles that of nurse and teacher, although she does not mention being a manager or her role as an academic. Fliss points out this omission during the CIG meeting, suggesting further overlaying and complexity of the junior academic middle manager role.

"*See…. I think that's limiting in itself, teacher, nurse, academic, because there's so much more to what we do in our roles as managers".* (Fliss)

Jess continues the discussion and suggests further exploration is required with regard to how the junior academic middle managers perceive individual identity and roles. Jess acknowledges the multiple roles of the junior academic middle manager; suggesting she sees how Bourdieu's concept of habitus is established in previous roles as the foundation for the junior academic middle manager role in the FHSC.

"*We should explore where we see ourselves by using the roles of a practitioner, teacher, manager and academic as a foundation to develop into these [junior academic middle manager] roles".* (Jess)

During stage one the roles Sue articulated did not include the role of middle manager, this could suggest that Sue does not feel fully embedded in her new role. This is in contrast to Jess, who considers that her previous roles act as a foundation for her development into the junior academic middle manager role. It is acknowledged that Sue is new to the coordinator role in the FHSC and is, therefore, relatively new to the role of junior academic middle manager. Further interrogation of the data suggests Sue may not have fully transitioned into this role after only three months. As Bourdieu suggests, Sue's habitus as a junior academic middle manager was not fully formed requiring further secondary socialisation to enable her to feel like a 'fish in water' (Bourdieu, 1977).

Fliss illustrates the complexity of the junior academic middle manager role, suggesting that she sees the role as more complex than the dual roles of nurse and teacher. Jess and Fliss describe how they have been undertaking the junior academic middle manager role for a number of years and as such have been exposed to the academic social field for longer. They suggest that junior academic middle managers need more development. Jess and Fliss debated their perceptions during stage three of the inquiry and reported that they have had more time to acquire capital and build habitus.

"Well, I didn't realise the complexity of the role when I got the post, to be good at what I was doing, and you have to feel comfortable and be good at what you are doing as a nurse, academic and manager". (Fliss)

"This role diverts your energy, you can't carry on doing what you did before because you've got a new role that you have to learn and develop and gain experience and ability in the role over years". (Jess)

"I don't think we develop the role enough though, it's like we do it by osmosis in the Faculty. We tend to just run around, there's very little development offered when you get promoted". (Fliss)

Regardless of years in post, all respondents reported feeling unsupported at times and had difficulty effectively managing the junior academic middle manager role in the FHSC. The CIG members decided that to gain a better understanding of the complexity of the FHSC role it would be beneficial to review the world café data to further explore this emerging theme in more detail.

The particular focus of this analysis was to gain an in-depth understanding of how secondary habitus in professional roles impacted on the FHSC academics in the world café. The findings from the world café event confirms that habitus, professional identity and socialisation in a professional role strongly influenced the challenges the FHSC academics encountered. This concurred with the dilemmas the junior academic

middle managers faced in their current roles and the complexity of managing professional academics in the FHSC.

The following vignette in Figure 15 was captured during stage four of the co-operative inquiry cycle. Heron (1996) states that this is the second phase of reflection, when the co-researchers make sense of the data generated in the action phases.

Figure 15: Vignette from the seventh CIG meeting

At the seventh CIG meeting during the second reflection phase, we initiated an appraisal of the conceptual map from the previous CIG meetings. This meeting was an opportunity to refocus the inquiry in order to start planning further actions. One of the CIG members was particularly fascinated at how strongly some of the other CIG members felt about their own professional identity. The CIG debated how these ideological views could impact on the Faculty organisational culture and climate. During this meeting one CIG member reflected on their own philosophical stance and how their identity had developed over time both as both a professional and an academic. The CIG members reflected on how they shared a sense of pride in being a nurse or midwife.

We pondered how this could be linked to the development of habitus and a shared doxa. The CIG members shared during this meeting that they had not appreciated how professional identity was so deeply rooted and internalised. The CIG members began to make further connections to the work of Bourdieu, recognising the deep-rooted feelings could be viewed as Bourdieu's notion of embodied habitus. The CIG members also agreed that having an understanding of organisational culture and climate was a crucial element worthy of further exploration. It was mutually agreed that an action needed to gain a better understanding of how Faculty staff perceived their roles in the University and Faculty would be beneficial to progress the research study. It was decided we would review different approaches and seek approval from FMG to undertake

further actions to investigate the climate and culture of the Faculty. The CIG, therefore, agreed to review the staff development days, one member agreed to source the previous staff evaluations for further analysis.

The data collected from the world café event enabled the CIG members to extend and deepen their understanding of the data generated in stages two and three from the event when the FHSC academics submitted their ideas on the 'post-it notes' provided.

"*Nursing culture is a "can do" attitude which encourages us to think that all staff can and should contribute to all programmes rather than staff concentrating on their areas of interest and strength"*. (FGN World café event)

"*There are professional and academic tensions with University regulations and NMC - we interpret the NMC's rules and guidance as if it is harsher and more restrictive than it is"*. (FGN World café event)

When the CIG reflected and analysed the data from the world café event during stage four of the inquiry, the two extracts from the post-it notes above were highlighted as significant; both extracts feature a strong emphasis on nursing culture and socialisation in the professional field.

The quotes from stage four which Heron (1996, p.55) describes as an opportunity for "*ideas and discoveries to be tentatively reached"* the reflective phase highlighted a frustration in attitude from Andi and Fliss:

"It's the tail wagging the dog syndrome". (Andi)

"*We are very hard on ourselves, like we have to prove something, we are also hard on our students making it tough for them like 'gate keepers', but we do some things really well but still feel not good enough".* (Fliss)

The quotes suggest that there is a power imbalance and tensions between the University and professional regulators, which is a cause of conflict for junior academic middle managers. Fliss highlights a perception of 'not being good enough' or 'being too harsh' and this feeling may be having a negative impact on the developing habitus of the junior academic middle managers. Fliss seems to describe the ongoing tensions and challenges that occur as the junior academic middle managers attempt to develop a shared doxa. A sense of belonging is needed for the junior academic middle managers to develop their understanding of the new rules, which at times are in conflict with each other (Maton, 2012). The CIG also critically debated and reflected during stage four on the impact of this conflict between the professional regulators and University regulations and how this affects their ability to shape habitus. The data suggests that professional academics in the FHSC feel an overwhelming responsibility to be gatekeepers of their profession and this is often in opposition to University regulations.

Following the second reflective phase during stage four, Sue also reiterated that she had a feeling of 'being pulled in different directions' and confirmed how difficult it was for her to feel in control when undertaking her junior academic middle manager responsibilities. She voiced the feeling of having 'different masters' which added to the complexity of her role.

"*I feel like a 'puppet on a string' … pulled in different directions, trying to balance the University regulations and professional requirements. I feel like a 'Jack of all trades' and master of none".* (Sue)

This quote from stage four suggests Sue felt she did not fully understand the rules of the game. She expressed difficulties dealing with the internal conflict as a novice junior academic middle manager and grappled with the complexity and understanding the 'rules of play' in her new junior academic middle manager role. Olga supported Sue's comments at the CIG meeting, and indicated she has similar difficulties in 'juggling her role' and role clarity would help her be more effective.

"*I feel the same, I often think what is my role? We need clarity and containment …we have numerous roles; where do I focus my energies constantly juggling research, teaching, practice and managing staff".* (Olga)

The fourth stage, is the second reflection phase where Heron (1996) claims the co-researchers become more cohesive and self-critical. The following quotes from the seventh CIG in June 2013 alludes that Pat and Andi found the CIG provided collaborative working and opportunities for change.

"I have found this [CIG] has provided some clarity and been supportive, giving me focus and gave us impetus to change and work collaboratively". (Pat)

"Yeah it's been useful, made me think about the bigger picture". (Andi)

Olga is a Deputy Head and this role is well embedded within the FHSC. Olga is also new to the junior academic middle manager role and, therefore, is in the process of developing into the role. Like Sue, she can be seen to be struggling with competing demands and priorities. Prior to commencing the junior academic middle manager role both Sue and Olga were Senior Lecturers whose main focus was teaching and programme leadership. Although both possess a wealth of experience and professional knowledge, it appears from the data that both Sue and Olga are in a period of transition. Olga's use of the word "containment" reinforces the findings from this study that additional support may be beneficial during periods of transition between roles.

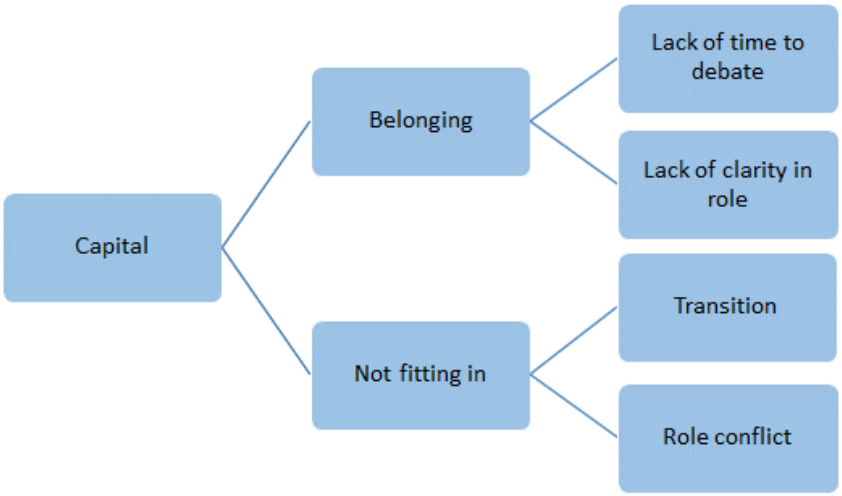
In summary, there is a sense from the findings that a change in role and responsibilities may cause feelings of uneasiness and a lessening in role confidence that implies a need for support and containment. It is evident from the findings that the junior academic middle managers perceive there is an additional complexity due to the professional education element of their role and this has caused a displacement in habitus. The findings demonstrate there are tensions for junior

academic middle managers with additional pressure caused as a result of organisational and professional requirements.

It has emerged that novice junior academic middle managers found dealing with multiple identities a great challenge and adapting to their roles as managers was also challenging. This finding is congruent with previous research in this area and is supported by the literature (Floyd & Dimmock, 2011; Mercer, 2009; Thomas-Gregory, 2014). The data also suggests that junior academic middle managers who have been in their role for a longer period of time also valued the opportunity to share knowledge and gain support during periods of change. It appears that informal peer collaborative learning is mutually beneficial for the development needs of inexperienced and experienced junior academic middle managers. The CIG provided a safe supportive environment and fostered the development of shared habitus and social capital.

4.3 Capital

Figure 16: Key concept and sub themes



The second superordinate theme the CIG mutually agreed that developed and emerged from the data were capital, with subordinate themes depicted in Figure 16 such as feelings of 'belonging', 'not fitting in' 'role conflict' and 'transition'. The junior academic middle managers' perceptions explored during stage one and the diagnosis

phase were that their professional and academic capital were not in tune and were actually in conflict with each other. When the CIG members considered these findings from a Bourdieusian stance this could be viewed as a deficiency in the type of social capital valued by the field. Fields are structured social spaces such as the field of education or clinical practice in which agents accumulate social capital. The junior academic middle managers took the opportunity during stages three and four of the inquiry they reflect and act on their own development needs, and these were perceived as unmet. Heron (1996) describes stage three as "*full immersion"* (Heron, 1996 p.49). Subsequently, the junior academic middle managers evaluated and implemented changes to the FHSC staff development days, it was agreed that the changes of the format and frequency was a positive move forward for staff development that would also assist the junior academic middle managers in their role.

This vignette in Figure 17 from the third stage demonstrates the importance of sharing knowledge to accumulate social and cultural capital and to work in a collegiate way to influence organisational culture and climate.

Figure 17: Vignette from the sixth CIG meeting

At the sixth CIG meeting during the action planning phase, a member immediately began to share her experiences of how a student was struggling in practice and the mentor was not supportive of the student's needs. The CIG began to debate that they believed that nursing and midwifery students learn through professional socialisation and they accumulate knowledge through good role models from practice and the Faculty. One member began to discuss and interpret this concept through the lens of Bourdieu, and raised a question as to how we could support the accumulation of social and cultural capital in the Faculty. A CIG member expressed how they believed they had initially been socialised in the hospital environment, and built social capital working with likeminded people and having a shared responsibility to ensure excellence in patient care. The other CIG members also reflected how they had been influenced by colleagues in the

past and more recently during the CIG meetings. It was agreed by all the members present that the CIG meetings had positively impacted on their personal and professional development. This led to a reflective conversation regarding how our current professional and personal development needs were being met in the Faculty. The group agreed that further actions needed to be undertaken to further enhance our organisational culture and climate.

A decision was made at this meeting to review and change the structure of the staff development days. Following analysis of the evaluations, we found that staff wanted a different philosophical stance and a changed format to the staff days. One of the CIG members suggested we develop and lead the staff days alongside other Faculty staff to give a voice to their learning and developmental needs. The CIG members debated the best format, one member shared how they found the CIG meetings beneficial as the group activity can be valuable in understanding each other's roles. It was, therefore, suggested we included a similar type of group activity into the staff development days. The other CIG members agreed that a group activity for the staff development days could also create a collegiate environment, providing opportunities for knowledge sharing, giving other staff a voice and create a climate for organisational change. It was mutually approved that a facilitated group approach for the staff development days could encourage accumulation of capital and democratic debate in the Faculty to give colleagues a voice to achieve transformation and influence our practice.

The following quotes from the third stage demonstrates that during the transition from senior lecturer to junior academic middle manager role individuals may require guidance and time to adapt and opportunities to have a voice.

Sue emphasises that she is having difficulty in understanding what her development needs are because she is new in post; she articulates a lack of guidance and support:

"*How can I know what my development needs are? We have just started in these roles; it is so confusing".* (Sue)

Sue appears to be declaring the deeper emotional atonement described by Heron (1996) which occurs during stage three of the co-operative inquiry. Sue may need further guidance and support to work through the priorities and complexities of the role as she accumulates further social capital. Olga expressed similar concerns and feelings during the second reflective phase.

"*I think the problem is there is not enough time to think and adapt to the University's priorities, there is role conflict, maybe we need more time to debate how we understand our roles".* (Olga)

Olga highlighted her desire for time to adapt to her new role that has strategic FHSC and University responsibilities. It could be considered that changes in the social field are impacting upon Olga's habitus and her ability to build capital. Olga proposes debate, as a method to gain an in-depth understanding of the junior academic middle managers' role in the FHSC.

"I believe our Faculty brings in a lot of money, yet I feel we are second class, it's like we don't belong here". (Fliss)

Fliss also articulated that she does not feel she belongs to the University, a perception also voiced by other junior academic middle managers. This feeling of 'not belonging' may be consistent with lack of capital and not yet feeling established within the field. Bourdieu views this feeling of 'not belonging' as a lack of development of habitus within a specific social field (Maton, 2012). Fliss' comment alludes to how the Faculty has developed economic capital, in that she views this as bringing in revenue to the University, this potentially can be seen as giving the Faculty power and an influential position in the University. Despite this financial power, as a junior academic middle manager, Fliss reports feeling disempowered, which may in part be due to her own sense of lack of capital in relation to her academic peers in the wider University.

Sally and Jess concurred with Olga's proposal for academic debate, agreeing that a type of 'professional academic supervision' similar to group clinical supervision would be advantageous to their development needs as junior academic middle managers. The following extract highlights that Jess believes that the CIG format used for this study would be valuable and promote a sense of belonging and a 'safe space' for discussion and reflection:

"*Like a type of 'professional academic supervision' maybe like this, a type of group supervision".* (Jess)

Peer socialisation and collaborative relationships appear to be valued by junior academic middle managers. It could be deduced that the CIG approach would provide the necessary space for development of habitus and enable the junior academic middle managers to feel confident in their roles.

"*Yes, I have found this [CIG] useful … it feels safe to talk, we can be honest and say what we like …".* (Sally)

Sally uses the emotive word 'honest' in her quote, signifying that honesty is valued by her, and Olga concurs with Sally in the extract below:

"When challenged, some people take it personally, it is not personal, it is to enhance our work". (Olga)

The above quotes from stage three may signify that Sally and Olga are now fully immersed and engaged as co-researchers. They report they cannot always be honest with some colleagues due to the fear of not being accepted. The junior academic middle managers frequently reported during the third stage of the inquiry that being able to be honest with peers led them to feel safe and develop a sense of belonging.

Figure 18: Vignette from the sixth CIG meeting

At the sixth CIG meeting during the action planning phase, in April 2013, it was apparent that the members wanted to chat with each other about their personal experiences. Members conveyed they were struggling with the complexity of their roles as junior academic middle managers, reporting the role was stressful and overwhelming at times. One CIG member shared with the group that they were struggling with the additional responsibilities of the junior academic middle manager role and felt frustrated by their lack of knowledge. This conversation though valuable and important did detract from the purpose of the meeting which was to analyse the world café event data. Another member tried to engage the group on task and began debating the challenges and complexity of being insider researchers. The CIG members then began to discuss their feelings and concerns of being co-researchers as we started to initiate the data analysis. The conversation explored the potential impact of multiple identities on the junior academic middle managers in the Faculty and we agreed that despite the meeting moving away from its initial remit we recognised the benefits of a collaborative co-operative inquiry. As such the CIG, was a forum for debate and the voicing of concerns. One CIG member commented on the CIG as a safe environment which created crucial opportunities for shared learning which developed greater understanding of our roles and the importance of creating a shared purpose within the Faculty. The intimacy of the CIG therefore enabled the development of action-in -learning and greater insights for the members in relation to the phenomena under investigation.

This notion from the CIG meeting described in Figure 18, is echoed in Cat's quote, which suggests that a more collegial approach to staff development may have a positive impact on the organisation, and junior academic middle managers could potentially gain a greater understanding of their roles and development needs, thereby building accumulated social and symbolic capital.

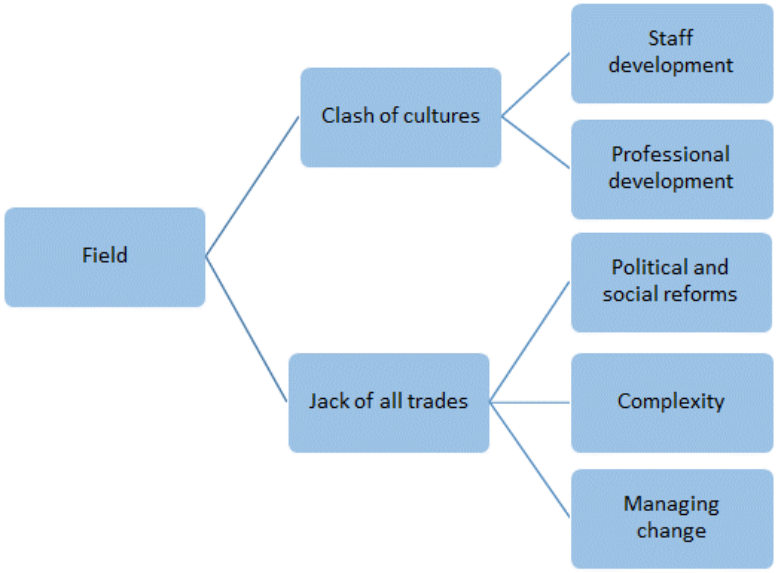
"*We need to feel safe to be honest; this may help us get clarity in our roles and responsibilities in practice, the Faculty and the wider University".* (Cat)

Once again, this extract from the third stage Cat highlights the complex social fields that junior academic middle managers operate in. Understanding the importance of capital, including how this influences the junior academic middle managers' perceptions of 'belonging' is crucial viewed from a Bourdieusian perspective. Capital and habitus do not work in isolation, there is an interrelationship between habitus and the accumulation of capital and field. When employed together they affect how individuals' perceive their social world and how their behaviours and dispositions are influenced by social structures (Grenfell & James, 1998).

4.4 Field

Detailed collaborative analysis alludes to the key concept of field as being a superordinate theme as depicted in Figure 19.

Figure 19: Key concept and sub themes



Following a collaborative scoping exercise during stage four of the inquiry, the CIG members continued through the inquiry in a cyclical fashion. Heron (1996) claims they are entering a second action phase of the inquiry. Figure 20 encapsulates the CIG members' review of their own staff development opportunities and needs across the University and the FHSC.

Figure 20: Vignette from the eighth CIG meeting

At the eighth CIG meeting during the second reflection phase, one of the CIG members revealed during the meeting that they felt their confidence and leadership skills had been enhanced during the research study due to the reflective discussions during the CIG meetings. Three other members agreed that the CIG had been a significant catalyst in changing and influencing their professional development, including gaining confidence to commence their own research journey doctoral programme. The co-researchers discussed how being part of the CIG has enabled them to enhance their critical thinking which has aided their development in their junior academic middle manager role in their field.

As a group we critically reflected on the changes we have influenced and we debated how action research had potentially empowered us collectively. One member stated that some of the changes may have happened organically without the CIG. However, the other CIG members believed that the impetus of the research study combined with the chosen method created an environment for the changes. One member discussed how they felt their position in the Faculty had changed and how they felt better able to actively challenge and influence change. The three members of the CIG who were progressing their own research studies, discussed how the safety of the group had been instrumental in their transformation from both a personal and professional perspective. One member shared how they were more self-assured and able to articulate their views and opinions form an informed position. It was recognised by some CIG members that they have matured into their roles, changing significantly during the research study even though their responsibilities had also increased during this time. The members agreed that at times the changes had been overwhelming and stressful resulting in minimal time for professional development. However, despite this the CIG empowered the members to continue to learn, respect each other's perspectives and have the confidence to influence nursing practice and research. One member stated that the action research methodology should continue when the research study concluded as it had supported their professional development.

It would appear that this type of situated learning should be used to continue to support and enhance the junior academic middle managers transition into their new roles.

Although the CIG members found there were a variety of developmental opportunities for themselves and staff, they reported they required a form of professional development which include both their professional and academic roles. The following quotes from the seventh CIG in July 2013 demonstrates how the junior academic middle managers articulated the lack of consideration of the wider strategic and policy implementation aspects of their role.

"There isn't enough staff development for our roles, we need 'strategic upskilling', such as finance, writing bids, project management and leadership development". (Andi)

"*I agree, our roles are just so complex, everything changes so quickly, I find managing the changes and keeping up to date difficult".* (Olga)

"*Could this be included in your professional development review*?" (Jenni)

The findings demonstrate that individual professional development reviews (PDRs) were fundamental to ongoing staff development needs within their Departments, but there appeared to be little consideration given to the junior academic middle manager role in the University.

This is highlighted in the following vignette Figure 21 from the fourth stage of the iterative co-operative inquiry process in July 2013:

Figure 21: Vignette the from seventh CIG meeting

At the seventh CIG meeting during the second reflection phase, the CIG members contemplated how their roles as junior academic middle managers had further exposed them to the organisational climate and culture within the Faculty. One member questioned how the CIG can influence the organisational climate and culture in the future, especially with the significant changes occurring within the HE sector and practice. The CIG members reflected and made notes on their own leadership and management qualities that they felt were transferable from practice to HE. One of the CIG members discussed their initial ideas for their own research, which would focus on transition for new academics recruited to the Faculty. The CIG members felt the proposed research would be beneficial for newly appointed academics.

During this reflective conversation, another member discussed how we could consider Bourdieu's analogy of a football game, and the proposed research study could be seen as a way of sharing our knowledge regarding the rules of the game and how to support transition into the field of academia. The CIG members discussed how this action could be developed further such as implementing a more formalised mentorship programme to support our new colleagues. Some CIG members suggested that as they had felt supported during their transition in the junior academic middle manager role by the safe environment of the CIG, it may be a useful approach to consider for new academics. It was agreed we would discuss with colleagues in our departments alongside reviewing the literature. It was agreed we would give feedback from our colleagues and a literature review would be shared at the next CIG meeting by the CIG member interested in pursuing this research study.

The JAMMs described how they felt that their individual PDR with their managers enabled them to discuss their development needs, but the conversation was primarily focussed on the Department and FHSC as opposed to strategic objectives or staff development in the University or the practice aspect of their role. This is highlighted in the following extracts:

"*It's more complex for us, it's not just about staff development in the Department. What we need is to develop a better understanding of our development needs between practice, the Faculty and the wider University"*. (Jess)

"*The changes in government policy doesn't help, every time there is a change in government policy the impact is massive on us".* (Sally)

The quotes from Jess and Sally highlights their perceptions of the complexity of their developmental needs and the potential needs of the junior academic middle managers associated with the changing policy drivers in practice and in HE, the strategic direction of the FHSC and wider organisational context. The issue Jess raises is that the junior academic middle managers' needs are multidimensional and require a holistic approach in order to understand the impact of change on the junior academic middle managers. These political reforms and organisational changes may cause a shift in the junior academic middle managers power and position in their field.

"*Now we work within HE, are we valued as practitioners, managers or academics, all are equally important?"* (Sue)

The extract from Sue during this second reflective phase suggests ambiguity in her role. Sue reflects on the value of her professional and junior academic middle manager roles.

Figure 22: Vignette from the seventh CIG meeting

At the seventh CIG meeting during the second reflection phase, we began sharing our stories regarding development from both individual and collective perspectives and experiences of our research journey. One member began to explore how their development needs were constantly in a state of flux due to the complexity of the junior academic middle manager role. Another CIG member highlighted feeling particularly challenged during times of change. A reflective

discussion commenced regarding how changes in policies impacted both on our profession and HE workload. The members voiced how the opportunities afforded in the CIG meetings enabled reflective time and a safe place for discussion and thinking time. Other CIG members stated that being part of the CIG had facilitated the development of new insights into the complexity of roles and challenges faced by professional academics in HE. The group reflective discussions were seen as pivotal to developing this greater insight, with members present testifying that the underpinning philosophy of co-operative inquiry had been influential in supporting the implementation of change. As a result of our discussions the group concurred that the adoption of Bourdieu's thinking tools had been beneficial in developing a better understanding of the complexity of the fields we worked in. The use of a conceptual framework enabled us to analyse the junior academic middle managers' world-view through a philosophical lens, gaining a better understanding of their value and sense of belonging within the social fields of HE and health care. The other members supported this notion, reporting an increased confidence which made them better able to cope with the complex and unpredictable fields of HE and clinical practice. One member reflected on how they now felt more able to develop systematic problem solving approaches which they used to influence change in the Faculty.

From a Bourdieusian sociological lens, Sue and the other CIG members may be uncertain which habitus is valued in the fields they are working within. This uncertainty could be interpreted as a feeling of being undervalued in all social fields and not truly belonging in any. It is noteworthy that the junior academic middle managers felt that all roles should be equally valued, and they needed opportunities to develop capital across the field boundaries.

"I often walk around the other campuses or sites and have nowhere to work, it is so demoralising, also in practice I don't feel I belong anymore, I don't feel valued by either of the organisations". (Sue)

This dissonance between organisations and feeling valued could be negatively affecting the accumulation of capital and development of habitus, which is ultimately having an impact on the Sue's effectiveness and sense of wellbeing in the field and ultimately in practice.

Olga's reflective discussion further demonstrates that she is recognising the differences between the social fields of the FHSC, practice and the University:

"*It's like being in a different culture, practice is so different … a bit like how the hospital education sites also have a sub-culture … I feel it is more caring at the sites than the University campuses".* (Olga)

The terms Olga uses to describe the different social fields are different culture or sub-culture. She describes the hospital sites as more caring; this is an interesting concept and suggests that the hospital sites may be micro social fields.

Crucially, for Olga the hospital sites would be a familiar social field as opposed to the larger education campuses, which appear less friendly and supportive. The notion of caring was repeatedly discussed and reflected on throughout the research study, particularly from a professional perspective. Pat's and Mel's reflective commentary draws together the perceptions of the junior academic middle managers by stating we are less caring.

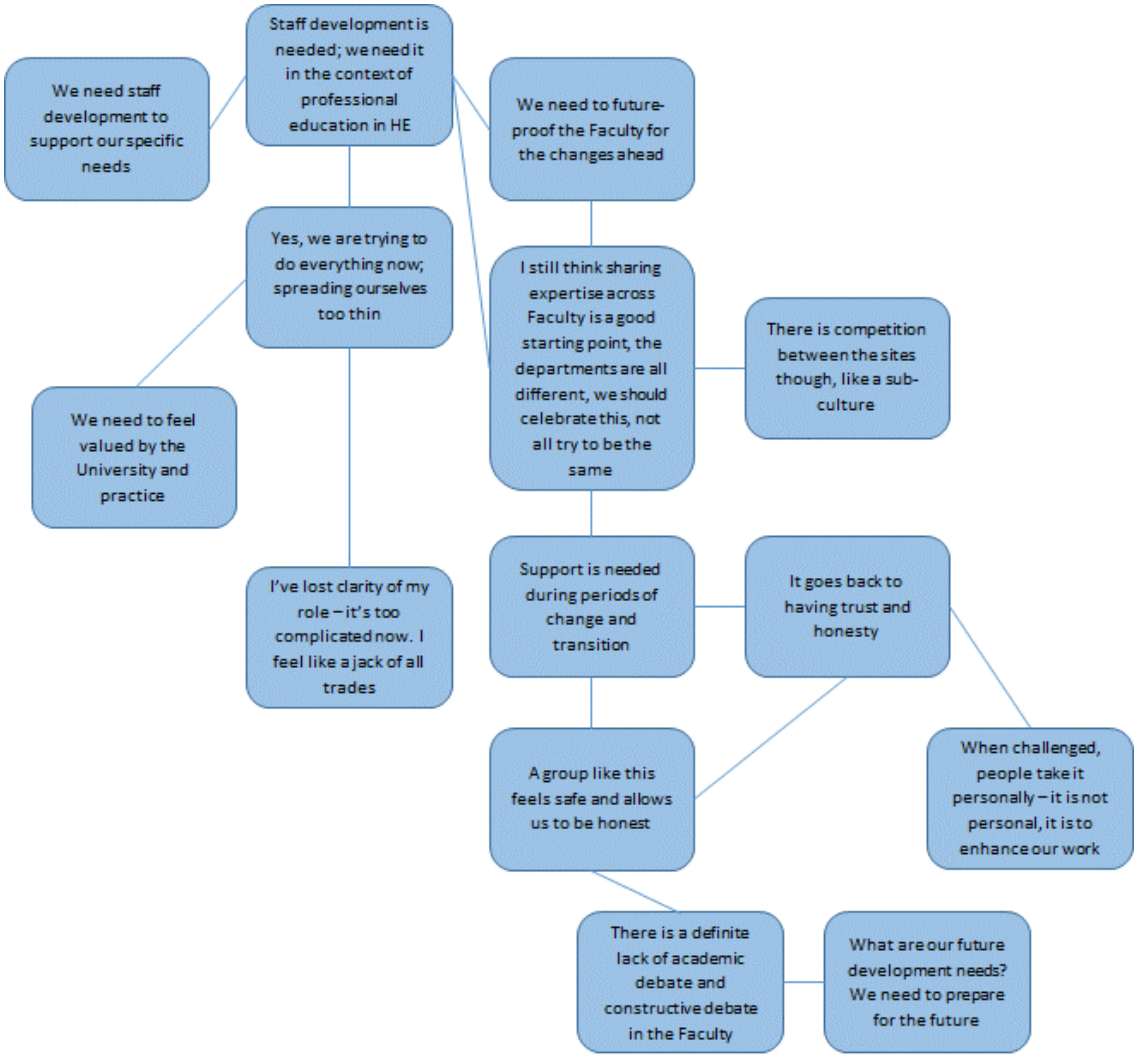
"*We seem to be sort of less caring than we used to be, like more business and academic output focussed".* (Pat)

"I still feel that some of us care for our students and staff like they are patients". (Mel)

Bourdieu would suggest that Pat and Mel's reflections could be interpreted in terms of them returning to an embodied habitus where they cared for patients and now students.

The data yielded from the CIG meetings is depicted in Figure 23, this is the accumulated concept map following the fourth stage of the CIG meetings, which demonstrates the findings in a format that was used to share at CIG meetings. Following a review of the data during the fourth stage, the CIG membership agreed it would be useful to revisit the data from the world café event, particularly exploring staff development needs in relation to the University and practice. This approach demonstrates the iterative nature and recycling of co-operative inquiry.

Figure 23: Concept map from CIG meetings



As can be seen from stage two, the action phase of the co-operative inquiry, the following extracts from the world café event, depict how the attendees voiced the

potential to make wider changes by reviewing the FHSC staff development day. As the following 'post-it note' quote from the world café states, there was a desire for FHSC staff to have more ownership over the content of the staff development day, because the day was perceived as a management tool and some of the attendees of the world café event believed they lacked a voice in the FHSC.

"*Staff days are an opportunity for change … we want ownership and a voice, also to share good practice. We want to have a voice rather than it [Staff Day] being used as a management tool".* (FGN world café)

Therefore, a key action for the CIG during stage three following the world café event was to review and analyse the staff day evaluations to extrapolate any themes. The analysis of the FHSC internal data from the staff development day evaluations, was an opportunity for the junior academic middle managers to give wider consideration to how the CIG could influence change.

When entering the fourth stage and second reflective phase of the inquiry the members considered the world café event data at the CIG meeting, Jess made a comment which is encapsulated in the following quote. When considered from a Bourdieusian perspective, Jess can be seen to be demonstrating the accumulation of social, cultural capital and habitus, which is a result of having been socialised into the doxa of the educational field after twenty-six years in HE.

"*We are all experts in education - why don't we use our skills on ourselves. We can then influence and make the required changes". (Jess)*

Jess suggested that as the experts in education, junior academic middle managers should employ their own knowledge and skills or habitus to enhance their own development needs. The format and approach of the world café was valued by the Faculty staff who attended the event as the quote from a 'post-it note' highlights. Bourdieu (1977) would suggest this is accumulating capital and developing habitus in

the field of practice. The following extract demonstrates how this was perceived at the world café event.

"*I would like this type of format for staff days, so there is a sense of meaningfulness and purpose. It was useful to find out that others feel the same". (*FGN world café)

Sally continued the debate with the following quote, which she quickly followed this with a question to the other CIG members.

"*I agree the staff day is a good starting place, staff development is needed as a wider Faculty approach rather than in isolation, but does it need to be in the context of our professional development too*?" (Sally)

This phrase "context of our professional development" could be considered to be an important concept, because Sally questions whether other CIG members need professional development in academia and professional contexts. The discussion continues because Sally perceives that the diversity between the University, FHSC and hospital sites requires bespoke development, but this needs to be aligned to professional practice too. Pat suggests in the observation below that each profession has its own distinct professional discipline within the field of professional practice.

"*I still think sharing knowledge and expertise across Faculty sites and Departments is a good starting point; we are all different, the Departments are all different … we should celebrate this rather than us all trying to be the same".* (Pat)

Alex concurs in the following extract suggesting that staff development days are an opportunity for staff to accumulate capital and develop a shared habitus together whilst recognising their unique social fields.

"The staff days would be a good place to share to celebrate our differences, ensure staff development and update our professional knowledge". (Alex)

The findings included in the quotes would seem to underline Bourdieu's notion of micro social fields where each site, campus and Department can be viewed as

separate micro fields. Each micro field may, therefore, require bespoke staff development that will enable the accumulation of capital appropriate to that field, thereby developing a sense of shared habitus and doxa.

The CIG members agreed that sharing expertise across the Departments and sites would be an action the CIG could take forward. Alex agreed to lead on the review of the staff development days and following consultation with FMG this was approved.

4.4.1 Archival data from staff development day evaluations pre-changes

Prior to making changes to the staff development days, the CIG analysed the previous years' staff development day evaluations during the cycles of the inquiry reflection-action -reflection are repeated. Heron (1996) describes these repeated stages as the iterative process throughout the co-operative inquiry. These patterns of divergence and convergence in the action phases sought to discover staff perceptions of how effective staff days are in terms of personal and professional development. It was felt that by reviewing the internal data from the FHSC, the CIG members would develop a better understanding of the FHSC staff development needs.

Generally, the staff day evaluations from 2012 (SDE12) were positive and the feedback suggested that the staff days were valued as an effective means of disseminating key information for the following reasons:

> *"Clearly addressing the Faculty agenda in terms of content"*. (SDE12)
>
> *"Useful update on what's going on"*. (SDE12)
>
> *"Gives an insight into the work of other Departments."* (SDE12)
>
> "*Good chance to understand other agendas*". (SDE12)

The respondents also reported the staff days were a valuable opportunity to network

> *"Good chance to catch up with colleagues."* (SDE12)

"Useful opportunity to network and catch up with people whilst they're having the refreshments." (SDE12)

"*Staff days are a great way of meeting/catching up with colleagues from across the sites".* (SDE12)

"The days are beneficial and a good opportunity to meet other departments, appreciate their input". (SDE12)

Furthermore, the respondents' feedback suggested that the following factors have a detrimental impact on the efficacy of staff development days:

"Currently communication is almost entirely one way, with the audience being talked at rather than listened to". (SDE12)

"I think staff are informed about things, but not asked their opinions, or given opportunities for discussion". (SDE12)

"It would be good to have more opportunities for academic debate". (SDE12)

"In their current format the staff days meet the need of management to convey information but offer little opportunity for staff to engage in discussion with them or their peers about key changes". (SDE12)

The staff day evaluations demonstrate that the staff who responded want an increase in their level of interaction during the staff development days, such as staff discussions and debates. The staff requested more opportunities to share ideas and have input into the agenda of the day. The staff also asked to make staff days part of a programme of staff development and to be part of a wider rolling programme of training for staff including research bids, publications, project work, teaching and

learning. From a Bourdieusian perspective the CIG members considered that the staff who responded wanted their capital acknowledged and valued. Their quotes illustrate that some of the staff believe the management team did not recognise the capital they had accumulated.

The CIG made the changes as part of stage three of the inquiry, this stage is when the co-inquirers become fully immersed in the inquiry and take action. The action the CIG members took was to lead on the evaluation and development of the future staff day events, archival staff day evaluations were analysed and the FHSC staff were asked what they needed to enable then to undertake their roles. These findings were reported to the FMG, and the following actions were planned by the CIG and implemented, for example the introduction of key speakers from practice, opportunities for debate and discussion were also introduced and replaced the previous workshop format.

4.4.2 Archival data from staff day evaluations post-changes

The CIG moved through cycles of reflection-action-reflection ending with a major reflection phase (Heron, 1996). This is where the co-researchers reviewed and reframed the actions taken. This included analysing the staff day evaluations from 2013 (SDE13), following the changes, included positive comments related to staff development for the case FHSC, which are highlighted below:

> *"The staff day was informative and inspirational. It is by far the best staff day I have attended in the last few years".* (SDE13)

> *"Genuine discussion developed, which people enjoyed".* (SDE13)

> *"Really good to engage students on staff day and have them feedback about what they have been achieving this really helps with my development".* (SDE13)

"This Staff day format demonstrates staff are valued and there is positive engagement as a team by the whole Faculty. This encourages my personal development as I feel enthused to develop myself". (SDE13)

The feedback on the new format for staff development days indicates that the staff who completed the evaluations felt their capital was valued, and this promoted a sense of shared habitus and belonging. Inclusion of the student voice was also seen as positive for the Faculty staff.

4.5 Second-order outcomes learning-in-action

The second-order outcome findings are discussed in this section and are considered as the learning, outputs and actions that have occurred during the lifetime of the study. I have written this section from a personal perspective and included extracts from my reflective journal, which I have maintained throughout the research study. The second-order findings in this section are primarily concerned with my own learning-in-action, and my personal and professional growth as a researcher and academic. However, it is worthwhile noting that there have also been two successful research outputs developed during this study which have contributed to the organisational understanding and learning within the FHSC. I believe this research study has contributed significantly to my learning and has influenced my habitus and current role in the case FHSC.

From my personal perspective, the entire process of undertaking research has at times been challenging. The following entry from my reflective journal (RJ) demonstrates this clearly:

"How can I be doing research? It is just so messy and is not how I imagined it to be … I don't think this is right, I feel so unsure and out of my depth". (RJ entry)

Initially, I thought this was due to the methodology I had chosen. It is acknowledged in the literature that action research is messy (Mellor, 2010). However, during my

doctoral journey, I started to develop tentative conversations with other active researchers in the FHSC about their research experiences. The researchers shared that their own doctoral journey had been a complex process at times and that this messiness was indeed part of the learning journey. Naively I had thought research to be a linear process. Maxwell (2005) concludes that qualitative research is reflexive, not prescriptive, nevertheless research needs to be designed considering the methodological and theoretical foundations in order to answer the phenomenon under investigation. Maxwell's (2005) interactive model suggests that the necessary components do not need to follow a particular sequence but need to work together in harmony. The utilisation of a theoretical framework that is epistemologically and ontologically aligned to the researcher is the research design that will feel most comfortable because the conceptual framework is shaped and constructed. A conceptual framework brings the research to life, incorporating the researcher's experiential and situational knowledge, combined with the underpinning theory and previous research to answer the research questions (Maxwell, 2005).

Utilising Bourdieu's theory of practice as a conceptual framework has enabled me to become more reflexive about research and my view of the social world has altered. The doctoral journey has been both illuminating and liberating, which I have thoroughly relished and loathed in equal measure. The challenges of reflexivity in research are not often documented in research papers and publications. However, some researchers do include reflexivity to demonstrate rigour in their research (Meyer & Cooper, 2015). Cooper undertook a self-reflexive analysis following a longitudinal action research study (Cooper, Meyer & Holman, 2013) and she recommends that action researchers should share the emotional aspects of their studies to inform the study and convey the impact upon the researcher. I concur with Cooper's view regarding the 'rollercoaster of action research', reflexivity can have a positive and negative impact on the researcher and there needs to be a safety net for researchers undertaking research and sharing experiences (Meyer & Cooper, 2015). From an ethical perspective this safety net for me has been the supervisory process. I also found an informal supportive network with colleagues, which enabled

me to accumulate social and cultural capital and shape my habitus in the research field.

This is interesting in terms of my own developing capital as a researcher, which built over the course of the professional doctorate programme.

"I am finding myself discussing research with the professors, they are approaching me and seem interested in my research". (RJ entry)

These 'research dialogues' occurred when making coffee or as corridor conversations; they were just quick conversations and probably not significant to the professors involved. However, it felt to me that I had been allowed to enter the periphery of a secret club, a new social field and was now maybe being accepted as a new member who was beginning to understand the rules of the game. As discussed earlier, utilising informal research networks to build capital has enabled me to shape my habitus as a researcher and develop a shared doxa in the field of research. However, I still view myself as a new member with much to learn. Throughout my doctoral journey I have engaged in critical reflection both alone and with others. Bourdieu considers reflexivity as a process whereby knowledge producers contemplate their own objective position contributing to the social world (Deer, 2012).

"I have just heard myself talking about Bourdieu's concept of habitus, I feel I am developing my own personal research philosophy. Am I becoming a researcher?" (RJ entry)

In this extract I am starting to articulate that I am feeling more confident at the mid-point of my doctoral journey. I appear to be more able to start conversations about research and conceptual frameworks. I believe this is evidence of my gradual transformation as I develop my skills as a researcher building capital. This notion of accumulated social and cultural capital is enabling me to acquire shared habitus as I am starting to feel accepted in the field by other researchers.

"I feel a change in the way I am supervising my MSc students, I am generally more confident with my students". (RJ entry)

As an academic this extract is significant, it is apparent that my new knowledge and confidence is having a beneficial impact on my teaching role, which is particularly evident when I am supervising students undertaking research. As a committed teacher this is gratifying and demonstrates the effect of transformative learning and how capital and habitus are transferable and contribute positively to a shared doxa of practice. Action research is deemed to be attractive to nurses because its key characteristics are developmental, practical, knowledge-in-action that enables individuals to flourish in the real-world practice (Meyer & Cooper, 2015; Reason & Bradbury, 2006).

Co-operative inquiry felt like a good fit for the overarching aim of a doctorate programme which is to facilitate a critical understanding and knowledge of advanced research in professional practice. I feel that my doctoral journey has enabled me to develop habitus in both pedagogy and research. I feel better prepared to support students with their real-world research and I continue to engage with and contribute to the University research culture both internally and externally. I have struggled at times to understand Bourdieu's key concepts. However, Bourdieu invites us to experiment with theory of practice. I believe that this experimentation and application of his concepts capital, habitus and field have developed my understanding of the research data and process of research at a much higher level than if I had not used a conceptual framework.

"*I am delighted that two of the CIG members who initiated their doctoral studies during my research study, have successfully submitted and passed their vivas. I feel sad that due to my illness I have had to delay my submission, but I feel privileged to have played a small part in their success. They were both novice researchers with embryonic ideas at the beginning of my doctoral journey and they have both told me that the CIG was a catalyst for their research".* (RJ entry)

From a Bourdieusian perspective, the CIG acted as a social field in itself. It was an opportunity for the CIG members to accumulate social and cultural capital and develop their habitus in a new field of practice. The issues and themes we discussed within the CIG not only supported their development and their successful submission to achieve their doctorate, the transmission of capital and habitus also influences their practice in the future.

The research study also stimulated internal changes in the FHSC that enhanced other FHSC staff development and efficiencies in the FHSC. These second-order outcomes are included in more detail in Table 5 in Chapter 5 in section 5.8.2 in relation to the impact of this study.

Chapter 5: Discussion, conclusion and recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will provide a critical commentary on the unique contribution this research study has made to the existing body of knowledge. Bourdieu's key concepts provide the structure and conceptual lens through which the discussion is located. The study's limitations and strengths will be discussed and recommendations for future practice will be made. The chapter will conclude with a personal reflection on my doctoral journey and my future ambitions for research.

As detailed earlier the aim of the research was:

> To gain an in-depth understanding of the personal and staff development needs of junior academic middle managers in a FHSC during a period of organisational change.

The research objectives agreed by the co-researchers are:

1. To identify the junior academic middle managers perceptions of their personal and staff development needs in a FHSC.
2. To create opportunities for collaborative reflection and peer support to enhance academic support and professional development for junior academic middle managers during organisational change.
3. To consider and critically appraise the theoretical and practice-based literature in relation to the findings of the study through the lens of Bourdieu's theory of practice.

5.2 Habitus

The findings from this research study have further emphasised that professional identity is a significant part of the junior academic middle managers' role in professional education (Floyd, 2012; Floyd & Dimmock, 2011; Thomas-Gregory,

2014). The concept of identity is formed through primary and secondary socialisation, which also includes professional socialisation (Bourdieu, 1977). Health and social care professionals, such as nurse academics, enter the field of education with a defined and developed habitus borne out of years of clinical and professional experience. Their habitus is modelled through clinical exposure and is influenced by and becomes part of the doxa of practice. Bourdieu's (1977) term 'doxa', describes the internalisation of knowing the 'rules of the game', which is evidenced in certain behaviours and values in specific social fields including the workplace. From an early stage in the research study the junior academic middle managers voiced the need for the opportunity to develop their identity or habitus and to 'learn the rules of the game' in relation to their junior academic middle manager role. In order to explain further Bourdieu (1977) states habitus is as a set of dispositions that are internally regulated and reflect the social structures and history of the individuals. Bourdieu does not consider that individuals are predisposed to behave in a specific way; habitus is both structured and structuring and can produce behaviours that are acceptable to the field (Grenfell, 2012).

Through their reflective conversations, the junior academic middle managers expressed how they felt supported by the collaborative peer group of the monthly CIG meetings; they indicated that this process of participatory research facilitated their development of capital and shared habitus. The junior academic middle managers proposed that this collaborative peer approach could be the beginning of an informal network to support their transition and professional socialisation and thereby aid their development. When viewed from a Bourdieusian perspective, this approach eased their transition as they accumulated capital. Floyd's (2009) research study supports the notion of informal peer consultation and recommends as a necessity training and development for middle managers to enable them to be effective. The findings from this research study are corroborated by the extant literature which also finds informal networks and knowledge sharing are mutually beneficial to individuals and produce positive impact on organisational behaviour and culture (CIPD,2017a; Mercer, 2009; Thorpe & Garside, 2017). This further supports the notion of the benefits of informal support mechanisms to develop habitus.

Floyd's (2009) research also identified that clarity regarding the academic middle manager role was required, particularly during recruitment and on appointment, as is improved transparency in job descriptions and expectations. The findings from this study concur with Floyd's findings; junior academic middle managers stated they needed further clarity regarding roles and responsibilities. The junior academic middle managers reported that they would welcome a closer collaboration with HR to modify job descriptions and consider a more fluid approach to roles and identities in the whole organisation. It was felt this would further enhance the junior academic middle managers' and the administrators' roles within the FHSC (Whitchurch, 2008). The findings suggest that the complex environment the junior academic middle managers are working in, caused conflict as they struggled to balance their old habitus with the new social field. This had a negative impact on them personally and on their efficacy in their junior academic middle manager role. This finding is important when giving consideration to the development of a robust social network that facilitates the accumulation of capital and habitus as roles evolve and diversify.

As managers and key figures in the Faculty, staff development of junior academic middle managers is particularly significant because their ability to undertake their roles effectively is essential to the success of the Faculty. The findings from this research are consistent with Thomas-Gregory's (2014) study which suggests that middle managers often lack transparency in their roles. She uses the term the 'dark side', which the academic middle managers in her study referred to as the meaningless and tedious daily activities such as overload of administration, and meetings and excessive emails. Thomas-Gregory (2014) also found in her study that academic middle managers had specific internal and external stressors that adversely affected their role. She asserts that there is an interplay between the organisation's vision and the individual's socialisation which undermines the individual's ability to be effective. Changes to organisational climate and culture require leadership and staff need to feel valued and motivated to make changes in their everyday practice (Cross & Carbery, 2016, Mayo, 2012).

The literature supports this viewpoint, stating there is often ambiguity in the roles and responsibilities of junior academic middle managers and academic middle managers (Floyd & Dimmock, 2011; Whitchurch & Gordon, 2010; Thomas-Gregory, 2014; Mercer, 2009). There is a need for a bespoke approach to staff development to enable junior academic middle managers to enact their roles. Ellis and Taylor debate (CIPD, 2017b) the importance of employees having an individual and collective voice to promote creativity, decision-making and organisational trust and this ultimately improves organisational climates and culture.

It could be considered, from a Bourdieusian stance, that peer debate and participation could enable the junior academic middle managers to accumulate the required capital and be better socialised into their roles (Floyd, 2009; Thomas-Gregory, 2014). It is well documented in the literature that it is through socialisation that professionals develop their sense of habitus which is embodied in habitus (Bourdieu, 1977; Floyd & Dimmock, 2011; Whitchurch & Gordon, 2010; Thomas-Gregory, 2014). Professional identity is reported as being unstable and individuals frequently have multiple identities that they are juggling on a daily basis. In particular, it is suggested that this may occur when individuals have developed the required habitus but are uncertain of the 'rules of the game' (Bourdieu, 1977). The CIG was seen to be a stabilising safe place where junior academic middle managers could explore and reflect on the social field thus developing a shared habitus.

A key finding from this research study is that the concept of habitus is complicated by, and inextricably linked to, the notion of multiple identities. This can be seen to impact the junior academic middle manager role and their personal and staff development needs. Habitus is structured by the past and the present and is created through social exposure during primary and secondary socialisation; however, habitus is not permanent and alters over time (Bourdieu, 1990; Maton, 2012). The findings highlighted that when significant change occurs in an organisation, the unique internal rules change and existing roles may alter, producing challenges for individuals as their habitus is challenged. Structural changes in the social field, such as policy impact and organisational restructuring, affects the equilibrium of the

organisation and may ultimately negatively impact the social connections and the relationships of people working within the organisation. It is accepted that social fields change over time (Grenfell, 2008). These changes in the social field may directly affect the organisational climate and culture (CIPD, 2017a; Cross & Carbery, 2016). Organisational change, therefore, requires leaders such as the junior academic middle managers to have an organisational development approach to enable the change to be successful (Cross & Carbery, 2016). The findings from this study suggest that co-operative inquiry can aid organisational development and support the required organisational changes for improved efficiency. The junior academic middle managers can be the required agents of change, who aid sustainable change that transforms organisational behaviour. This is further supported by Taylor's (2018) study, which found an informal network of middle managers can enhance creativity, critical reflection, problem-solving skills and divergent thinking (Taylor, 2018).

These changes, coupled with the daily tussles the junior academic middle managers faced managing their complex multiple roles, can be interpreted as having caused 'interactional balance'. This is a term that Thomas-Gregory (2014) adopts in her research to describe how professional and individual academics' identity and roles can be in direct conflict with each other. Her study found that during periods of change such as organisation restructuring and the creation of new roles, there was a negative impact on the habitus of the participants. The junior academic middle managers in this study were going through a period of transition of this type in the FHSC. They reported that these significant changes in their everyday practice impacted negatively on their ability to be effective and manage the changes that were occurring in the organisation.

It could be considered that the junior academic middle managers shared habitus is a collective understanding developed over time that is often subconscious and at times may not be congruent with the situation anymore. According to Bourdieu (1977), this may cause feelings of uncertainty, which was highlighted by the junior academic middle managers when they used emotive language to share their feelings in

statements such as “it’s a struggle” and “it’s confusing”. Bourdieu (1977) refers to this as a state of hysteresis and is the feeling of being a ‘fish out of water’, that is triggered when there is dissonance between the individual’s habitus and field. This is further emphasised in the literature, which proposes that newly appointed academic managers such as junior academic middle managers need an enhanced ‘toolkit’ that provides support and time to enable growth and development into a new role. In Bourdieusian terms there is a need for transitional support in order to accumulate capital and shape developing habitus. This study’s findings suggest that in order to acquire the required new knowledge, values and specific skills set for their role, the junior academic middle managers should have day-to-day development and support in their practice.

It is crucial to work closely with HR to ensure that the people with the required skills and knowledge are appointed to new roles. These junior academic middle manager roles were internal appointments; thus, utilisation of appraisals and talent management is essential to a succession plan that values the accumulation of capital (Bourdieu, 1977; Mayo, 2012). A different approach to staff development is vital and working collaboratively with HR could enhance the staff development of the junior academic middle managers to ensure that their unique contribution to the organisation is valued (CIPD, 2017a). Accurate job descriptions and ongoing staff appraisals can support the development of staff and also assist in planning for future challenges (Mayo, 2012). These changes are required to aid the required transformation to competency in their new role (Floyd & Dimmock, 2011; Knight & Trowler, 2000; Mercer, 2009). This transformation and shaping of habitus is crucial and is embodied by the individual’s past and present, shaping the individual’s way of thinking and acting in the social world they inhabit.

Primary habitus and socialisation are the most influential, creating ‘embodied history’ (Bourdieu, 1990). However, secondary socialisation such as education and professional roles, embodies the ‘rules of the game’ and produces instinctive behaviours likened to tacit knowledge (Grenfell, 2012). This secondary socialisation becomes integrated with primary habitus to become a unified habitus which is how

professionals are socialised into their professions. It could, therefore, be argued that the very reason health and social care professionals are employed as academics is because they contextualise and teach professional practice. They are role models for the future workforce and support the secondary socialisation and the future embodied habitus of their students.

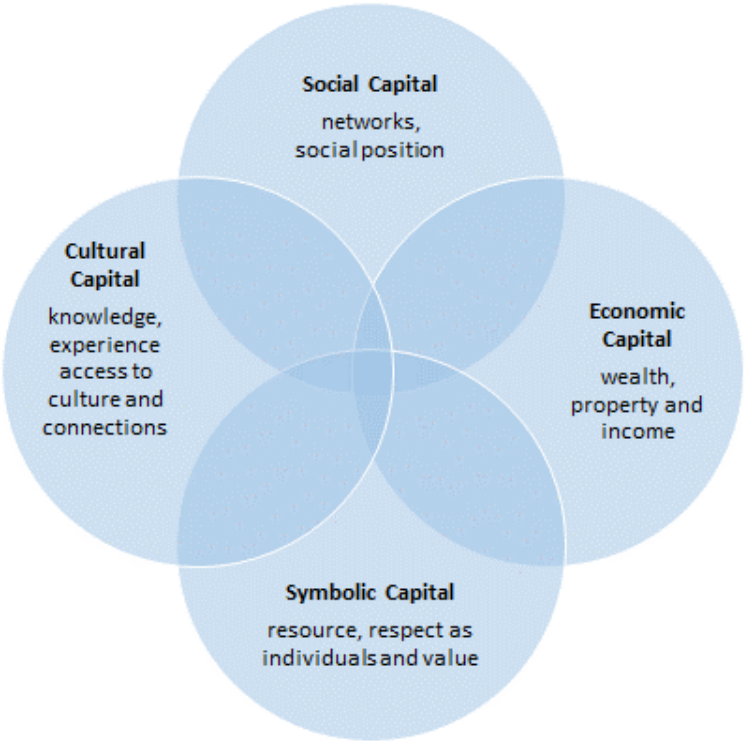
This research study has highlighted that the junior academic middle managers need to have an awareness of the valuable contribution they make to secondary socialisation and how the academics they manage on a day-to-day basis also influence students' professional socialisation. Having a better understanding of the effect of socialisation on professional programmes could enhance the student experience and support junior academic middle managers in acquiring an in-depth understanding of the world, which ultimately enriches their practice and tacit knowledge.

It is recognised that professionals working in HE are also immersed in another field of practice. This research study considers how transition is supported to enable junior academic middle managers to work effectively across distinct social fields and develop a shared habitus within the social fields of education, management and practice. The findings suggest that the junior academic middle managers in the study exhibited a sense of loss for their old world when transitioning into their new roles; they clung to their previous habitus and mourned the loss of their former position in the field (Bourdieu, 1977).

5.3 Capital

Capital is one of Bourdieu's key concepts, which he categorises into four distinct elements outlined in Figure 24.

Figure 24: Bourdieu's categories of capital



From a Bourdieusian perspective, capital is a term used to consider assets that can be exchanged for power, dominance and position in the social world (Moore, 2012). During CIG meetings, members shared that they were 'struggling' since moving into their new roles. This could be interpreted as having an altered position within the field without yet acquiring the capital needed to undertake the role. Social capital is linked with knowledge production via networks, which can be seen as a reciprocal durable network of individuals, who know the norms of the field and through accumulated social capital enables new ways of thinking, thus adding value to organisations (Bourdieu, 1990; CIPD, 2017a).

The junior academic middle managers during the period of this study had not had time to act as a reciprocal, durable network because they were still establishing their position in the field of practice. This led to the junior academic middle managers having difficulties articulating their developmental needs because they were not confident of the rules of the game or what their developmental needs were. The literature discusses the need for additional support and guidance during periods of

transition (Gregory-Thomas, 2014; Mercer, 2009). During the transition period the junior academic middle managers were all included in the HR probationary system. It is crucial to ensure that the probationary review is not a tick-box exercise but is supportive and focusses on the challenges of transition between roles and how identity can impact upon the junior academic middle managers. There also needs to be consideration of how organisational culture influences the organisation's values and behaviour. Junior academic middle managers reported they needed to feel safe. Utilising the probationary review to give the junior academic middle managers an individual voice and continuing with the CIG to give them a collective voice (CIPD, 2017b) may provide opportunities to recognise the complexity of the junior academic middle manager role and enhance socialisation into the role and the development of more synergy with the organisational climate and culture (Cross & Carbery, 2016; CIPD, 2017a).

It is suggested in the literature that there are specific challenges that occur when a new role is created in an organisation. A change in identity or role can adversely affect an individual's social capital; this reduction in capital is thought to be due to a change in a new field of practice that challenges the individual's habitus and position in the field (Bourdieu, 1977). Organisational changes and the emergence of new roles can cause anxiety and result in fear of the unknown. It is fundamental to ensure that staff are socialised into their new roles in an organisation so that they gain an understanding of its organisational behaviour and culture (Cross & Carbery, 2016; CIPD, 2017a).

Deem (2004) found that academics who took on a leadership role, such as the junior academic middle managers in this research study, experienced increased workloads and found that the accountability added an additional pressure to their role. The findings from this study indicate junior academic middle managers need to be supported during this period of transition to develop the capital that is required to cope with the increased responsibilities and work pressures. The study findings suggest that informal support such as group supervision may be beneficial because it creates opportunities for discussion and peer support; these strategies can mitigate

the additional pressure of the new role. This should be coupled with working closely with the HR Department to ensure job descriptions are accurate and that there is synergy in the training and development available in the University.

Needing more thinking time and a place for honest, safe debate were key themes that all CIG members reported as essential for their staff development. Many of the CIG members stated that something akin to clinical supervision from clinical practice would assist them in developing and enhancing their roles. Considering this through a Bourdieusian lens, the novice junior academic middle managers would value a forum where they can acquire capital. Even more experienced junior academic middle managers felt this would be useful due to the complexity and ever-changing environment. Olga's quote below emphasises this notion.

"*I think the problem is there is not enough time to think and adapt to the University's priorities, maybe we need more time to debate how we understand our roles".* (Olga)

The findings of this study corroborate that there is a need for supportive relationships and social networks, which are recognised as being crucial to building and accumulating capital over a period of time. Doxa and habitus and relationships are developed over time, to produce this shared vision and set of beliefs. This is highlighted in the statement from Olga who articulates "*there is not enough time to think and adapt".* This concept of 'not enough time' could be considered as a consequence of a change in the social field. This can be seen to impact on Olga's agency and her need to accumulate social capital in order to be effective in the junior academic middle manager role.

"*I feel the same, I often think what is my role? We need clarity and containment … we have numerous roles; where do I focus my energies constantly juggling research, teaching, practice and managing staff".* (Olga)

The findings suggest the concept of 'professional academic supervision' similar to group clinical supervision would be beneficial to enable the junior academic middle

managers to build habitus and develop capital. The CIG members stated that the CIG format provided them with a 'safe space' for honest open discussion and reflection. This type of format could be developed into a regular meeting for junior academic middle managers, as an arena for professional learning and support during change. The methodology could also be employed to develop future projects within the FHSC. In a changing and evolving environment, co-operative inquiry could be adopted by FHSC academic and administrative staff to facilitate change for specific issues or practice issues and could be a powerful force in organisational development and change. Undertaking co-operative inquiry projects offers a collegiate approach that the FHSC could employ to be more inclusive and to facilitate change from the bottom-up. This belief is corroborated in the literature (Jameson, 2012; Levett-Jones & Lathlean, 2008, 2009); feeling valued and having a sense of belonging enhances and supports reciprocal trusting and authentic relationships. This collegial approach to staff development and co-operative inquiry could allow the junior academic middle managers to work together with a shared purpose and offers the potential to promote a cultural shift. This concept is echoed in Cat's quote which suggests this approach may have a positive impact on all entities of the organisation.

"*We need to be honest; this may help us get clarity in our roles and responsibilities in practice, the Faculty and the wider University"*. (Cat)

Working in an environment such as HE that spans across other complex social fields can affect the agency of the individual junior academic middle managers. The findings suggest that junior academic middle managers need the opportunity to share their concerns and debate with peers in a safe place. Providing this type of staff development may allow the junior academic middle managers to accumulate capital which is acquired over a period of time by individuals and groups and can be mutually beneficial for the individuals and the organisation (Winter, 2009).

5.4 Field

Field is one of Bourdieu's key concepts and it signifies the social and professional contexts that individuals and groups function within. However, it is important to appreciate that fields are relational and do not exist in isolation. Field was an aspect that was considered by the CIG during, the junior academic middle managers' debates in relation to a 'sense of not fitting in' or 'feeling valued' by the wider University. As discussed earlier, for the FHSC academics, secondary socialisation occurs in clinical practice, and it also occurs in education. The use of the term wider could be interpreted as the junior academic middle managers not feeling part of the University field, but on the periphery, and this made some feel less of an academic.

Bourdieu (1984) argues that in order to understand behaviour in practice it is essential to scrutinise the social space or the field, rather than just the dialogue in isolation. It could be that academics in the case FHSC still do not feel included in the HE sector. Their feeling of not belonging may be associated with the notion of hysteresis that is the junior academic middle managers have left their old habitus behind and are now trying to form an identity within a new social field. The junior academic middle managers have spent many years acquiring social and cultural capital in their professional field before entering the field of HE. The findings from this study suggest that the junior academic middle managers perceive that other academics in the case University are seen as 'true academics' whereas they are still developing habitus in the educational field and still learning the rules of the game in play (Grenfell & James, 2012; Maton, 2012). This is highlighted in emotive terminology such as 'Jack of all trades and master of none', which may indicate that the junior academic middle managers in the CIG are feeling a dislocation of their habitus as a result of working across practice and HE that are very different social contexts and fields. As previously discussed, it is important to ensure that when creating new roles HR advice is sought and consideration is given to how transition will be supported by the University's probationary system, ongoing appraisal procedure and staff development opportunities.

Bourdieu (1977) states that it is not only important to understand the current field but to also appreciate the historical trajectory and evolving nature of the field to gain a true understanding of current behaviours and cultures. This notion is supported by Cardwell, Gray, Davis, and McKenna (2019) who state that the transition from Schools of Nursing in hospitals to HE was not easy for nurse educators who have possibly struggled with their loss of capital in the field. The organisational culture of Schools of Nursing had a shared habitus that encompassed the 'rules of the game', ideologies and the accumulated capital gained in the professional field where behaviours are taken for granted. When Schools of Nursing staff transitioned into the field of HE this caused dissonance with their habitus and doxa. When transitioning roles into a different field, employing organisations should be cognisant of the potential negative impact, which requires development and support during periods of transition. Bourdieu concurs with this notion, arguing that shared habitus and doxa of the field does not easily transfer to the new field of HE (Maton, 2012) and can be considered in terms of 'hysteresis' (Bourdieu, 1977). When entering a new field, agents are attempting to establish and accumulate capital, it could be argued that this was a challenge for some CIG members. They did not feel completely socialised into the field of HE, nor had they accumulated the required associated capital. Therefore, they were challenged by the FHSC restructure and the additional responsibilities of the junior academic middle manager role.

The majority of health and social care professionals are experts in practice with high levels of responsibility prior to commencing a role in HE. Health and social care professionals tend to gain their first degree in nursing, and practice in their professional role for many years, undertaking study part-time in their practice role, thus building capital in their clinical field. It is more usual for nurses to study at doctorate level once they move into an academic role, due to lack of opportunities for health and social care professionals to align themselves with an academic career. However, there have been recent professional debates surrounding health and social care professionals embarking on doctorate studies earlier in their careers to develop research skills in practice that can directly influence practice.

The findings from this study suggest that there is dissonance between the habitus of the junior academic middle managers within the current field of practice which may influence their behaviour, decision-making and affect their ability to prioritise some aspects of their roles (Grenfell & James, 2012; Maton, 2012). This could be the result of the junior academic middle managers altered position in their current field. Habitus cannot be seen, but the effects of a change in habitus are played out in people's beliefs, behaviours and practices and may compromise the junior academic middle managers' habitus (Bourdieu, 1990). The concept of habitus was significant when developing understanding of the development needs of the junior academic middle managers in this study. The professional roles and multiple identities that people bring to a new role is their enduring habitus, which has become embodied. Maton (2012) explains that habitus is disrupted when the position in the field is altered, and this affects the individual's practice. This is an important point that should be considered when formulating any staff development strategy, particularly at times of organisational change or policy reform.

In this research, the junior academic middle managers reported they felt like they were juggling their multiple identities and roles, and Sue used the analogy of feeling like a "puppet on a string". Similar feelings are reported in the work of Floyd and Dimmock (2011), whose research participants reported conflict between the multiple identities that exist within the academic middle manager role. Floyd and Dimmock (2011) use of the terms jugglers, copers and strugglers, these terms could also be applied to the junior academic middle managers in this research study, who reported similar challenges in their role. This could be considered that the junior academic middle managers did not have the accumulated capital in the junior academic middle manager role.

It is suggested in the literature that managing these personal and professional identities can cause role conflict for some academics (Floyd & Dimmock, 2011; Mercer, 2009; Thomas-Gregory, 2014). Floyd and Dimmock's (2011) study concludes that the HE sector does value 'academic career capital', and from a Bourdieusian stance, this could be considered to be cultural and social capital in the field of HE.

Lack of social and cultural capital influences position and power in the field and may negatively affect the personal and professional identities of the junior academic middle managers. This in turn can have an impact on career progression, viewed through a Bourdieusian lens, this can be seen in terms of the habitus of the individual and the accumulated capital being converted into a social position in the field, which, in turn, promotes the junior academic middle managers dominance and power in practice (Bourdieu, 1977; Maton, 2012; Petit-dit-Dariel et al, 2014). It is acknowledged that habitus is created by the interplay of social processes that are internalised and transferable between contexts. The findings from this study are supported in the literature that suggests there is a requirement for informal group staff development during the transition to a new social field (Bourdieu, 1977; Maton, 2012).

5.5 Summary

Throughout this research study the multiple identities and habitus of the junior academic middle managers often appeared to be in conflict with each other in relation to the different perspectives, values and beliefs required in the FHSC. The key concepts of habitus, field and capital have been invaluable when considering the impact on the junior academic middle managers' staff development needs in the case FHSC. This research study has highlighted that the junior academic middle managers were operating in a changing dynamic environment whilst working across the two diverse social fields of education and their professional practice. It is recognised that this can cause conflict for the junior academic middle managers in their roles because each social field has its own doxa and rules (Bourdieu, 1977).

The literature acknowledges that there are likely to be additional demands for the junior academic middle managers in the FHSC who have to adhere to two diverse sets of regulations: the University's principles and regulations and professional body requirements including educational standards (NMC, 2018a, 2018b; Thomas-Gregory, 2104). The literature states that junior academic middle managers must still observe the same rigorous requirements of professional practice to remain on the

professional register. This research highlights that junior academic middle managers require bespoke staff development particularly at time of change, and this development approach should be flexible and informal to accommodate the junior academic middle managers' diverse requirements. It is well documented by Bourdieu (1977) that the development of habitus takes time to become internalised and forms part of professional field and practice. This research study highlights the need for an informal peer group approach to support the junior academic middle managers in periods of transition and aid their development of habitus and ultimately doxa across diverse social fields.

5.6 Research objectives

In this section the research objectives will be revisited in relation to the discussion chapter.

Objective 1: To identify the junior academic middle managers' perceptions of their personal and staff development needs in a Faculty of Health and Social Care.

This research study has clearly identified that the junior academic middle managers' perceptions and experiences of their multiple identities caused conflict between their professional and academic roles. This conflict was particularly challenging when there was a period of change in the organisation suggesting there is a complex interplay between identity and role. The findings highlight that a change in the social field can adversely affect habitus and be expressed as a lack of capital in the new field. It is recognised that there were challenges identifying individual personal development needs and this may have not been fully achieved. Yet, the study gained an in-depth understanding of the staff development needs of the CIG. The findings from this study suggests transition into a new role may require additional support particularly during times of change. The findings from this study reinforce previous research by Floyd (2016) and Thomas-Gregory (2014) which suggests it takes time to build and accumulate the capital required to adapt to a new role in HE, during immense organisational change or when moving into another role. This period of

transition could be supported by a type of academic supervision for professionals working in HE, similar to the CIG. This approach will provide a safe environment for discourse with peers and also act as a catalyst for change in roles and in the organisation.

Objective 2: To create opportunities for collaborative reflection and peer support to enhance academic support and professional development for junior academic middle managers during organisational change.

This research has authenticated that utilising a collaborative approach for staff development, such as co-operative inquiry, is beneficial for the development of habitus and enables junior academic middle managers to accumulate social and cultural capital in the social field. Professional identity is formed during initial exposure and socialisation into their profession. This research evidences that professional socialisation through social networks in HE can be highly influential when trying to develop understanding of complex sociological issues. The co-researchers agreed the environment of the CIG enabled them to critically reflect on their practice, education and research capital, building a living theory and working in a collegiate way which transformed their work and development (Marshall, 1999, 2016). Reflexivity is central to co-operative inquiry; in that it relates participation and democracy to influence change in practice.

A challenging aspect of this research was that co-researchers sometimes lost interest and did not always prioritise the CIG meetings in their diaries. Although Reason and Bradbury (2001) advocate that active learning and development derived from being involved in and contributing to a co-operative inquiry study is transformational, it is noted from this study it is crucial to maintain momentum, by ensuring involvement and motivation of the CIG members. In hindsight I could have promoted the benefits to the CIG members more vigorously and encouraged more ownership and participation during the later stages of the research study to promote enhanced ways of working. This is supported by Meyer and Cooper (2015) who state that co-operative inquiry enables the boundaries of practice, research and practice to merge,

thus producing knowledge and contributing to social change by making sense of the world and developing new ways of working (Heron & Reason, 1997).

Objective 3: To consider and critically appraise the theoretical and practice-based literature in relation to the findings of the study through the lens of Bourdieu's theory of practice.

Throughout this research study and thesis, I have endeavoured to integrate Bourdieu's key concepts of habitus, field and culture in relation to the theoretical and practice-based literature, incorporating the conceptual framework in the findings and discussion chapters. On reflection the use of Bourdieu as a conceptual framework at times became the focus of the study and may have distracted me from the underpinning aim and objectives and the richness of the journey with my colleagues. Although, I must acknowledge developing an understanding and adopting Bourdieu's theory of practice as a conceptual framework has developed my reflexivity and illuminated my practice as an academic. I now view my practice and the social world through the lens of Bourdieu. The extant literature also supports Bourdieu's theory of practice to support learning–in-action to explore professional and cultural socialisation in HE (Floyd, 2016; Thomas- Gregory, 2014).

At times, I have had great difficulty understanding Bourdieu's theory of practice, the complexity of his concepts have overwhelmed me as a novice researcher. I have constantly revisited the literature and sought virtual and actual advice from social media and colleagues, respectively. This has enabled me to accumulate social and cultural capital, thus developing my habitus in the field of practitioner research. Although I believe I have applied Bourdieu's conceptual framework to this research study, I am cognisant that I still need to further my understanding due to the complexity of Bourdieu's theory of practice. In my role as a HoD in the field of professional education in HE, this study has enabled me to deconstruct and reconstruct my everyday practice with colleagues and students. Bourdieu's work has been highly influential and a powerful lens to explore the complexity of staff development needs in a FHSC. From theoretical and research perspectives, the

utilisation and application of Bourdieu's 'thinking tools' have heightened my awareness and understanding that this is the beginning of my research journey.

5.7 Reflexivity and contributions and recommendations

5.7.1 Personal learning

This section details a personal reflection on my doctoral journey and how habitus has contributed to my learning, growth and current practice. Bourdieu's (1977) key concepts have not only enabled me to conceptualize and define the phenomena under investigation but are now my 'thinking tools' and have altered my world view. I did not have a good understanding of Bourdieu's conceptual framework at the beginning of the study. However, during the lifetime of the study, utilising the key concepts of habitus, culture and field has transformed my thinking and aided the development of reflexivity. Bourdieu's (1977) theory of practice has been invaluable to enable me to explore research concepts, deconstructing my assumptions throughout the doctoral journey. Grenfell (2012) argues that once you begin to view the world in terms of habitus, it becomes the individual's habitus and provides practical mastery. I believe I have started to develop practical mastery by accumulating capital and evolving in a new field of practice. I feel better able to critically appraise and synthesise my practice at a level that I did not know was possible. However, at times, I have had more questions than answers as I continually revisited the underpinning theoretical and practice that supported my development.

From a Bourdieusian viewpoint, the ability to be a critical, analytical, reflective and compassionate practitioner has been the accumulation of capital that ultimately provided me with the 'toolkit' to further develop within HE. I believe Bourdieu's 'thinking tools' are the crux of professional learning, identity, and fundamental to how organisational culture influences professionals and staff development in HE, although there are many alternative philosophies and viewpoints.

5.7.2 Implications for practice

When I view my everyday practice through a Bourdieusian lens, I now have greater understanding of how the roles I play in the social world are interrelated, ultimately providing the tacit knowledge to inform decision-making and problem-solving demonstrated through my professional practice. The literature I have read whilst undertaking this study suggested that it takes time to feel comfortable and confident in multiple roles and identities such as nurse, academic and manager. This research study has completely transformed me both as a practitioner and as an individual and this has occurred over a period of years and been crystalized over the past twelve months. The development has given me a greater passion to continue to gain further understanding of how the social world is constructed and how this can be used in my professional practice. I plan to continue to exert my influence by continuing to support and manage staff in a collegiate way and inspire students through research and teaching.

5.7.3 Methodological reflections

I am confident that the chosen methodological framework was the correct choice for this research study. I wanted to develop a 'living theory of my practice', and I chose co-operative inquiry to facilitate and guide my research and doctoral journey (McNiff & Whitehead, 2012). Co-operative inquiry is about facilitating knowing-in-action or creating a body of actionable knowledge thus generating both theory and practice knowledge (Coghlan, 2019). Co-operative inquiry ultimately blurs the boundaries of education, practice and research, thus making it an appropriate methodology for my role as a HoD in HE and in terms of my ontological perspective. As a practitioner, I bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to my research and practice, which shapes the research and my habitus. Therefore, utilising co-operative inquiry as the methodological framework was the correct choice and is akin to my philosophy of undertaking research with others and facilitating change whilst collaborating with others. Co-operative inquiry does not seek to be generalisable and the aim of this study was not to generalise the findings, but to develop an in-depth understanding and change in my own organisation. The generation of knowledge to improve

practice by collaboration and reflective discussions with colleagues was influential in developing my understanding of organisational culture and change. Utilising this methodological approach has enabled me to develop my knowledge and understanding as an insider researcher whilst further developing my interpersonal and facilitative skills to become a responsive and flexible researcher (Coghlan, 2007). It is acknowledged that co-operative inquiry is emergent and, therefore, cannot be predetermined. This also makes co-operative inquiry a stimulating methodology to facilitate change in the social world (Meyer & Cooper, 2015). I believe utilising co-operative inquiry has allowed me to analyse the social world in a collaborative and democratic process, challenging my ontological and epistemological assumptions in an ever-changing unpredictable landscape (Williamson et al., 2012).

5.8 Conclusion and recommendations

5.8.1 Contribution to practice

Prior to this study there has been little research in the area of junior academic middle managers in a FHSC. This thesis contributes to the existing body of evidence related to academic middle managers in HE. The findings suggest there needs to be greater clarity and transparency of academic roles with enhanced support to aid role transition (Floyd, 2016; Thomas-Gregory, 2014). The research has made an original contribution to staff development in my employing organisation, which could be adapted for other education organisations. The research offers a unique contribution, providing new insights and understanding of how professional and academic roles are sometimes in conflict during change. It is also acknowledged that multiple identities can impact on the complex interplay between professional and academic roles. This study appears to be the only co-operative inquiry study, to the gain an in-depth understanding of junior academic middle managers' staff development needs, consequently providing a unique methodological understanding of junior academic middle managers in a FHSC. This co-operative inquiry study offers five key findings that contribute to practice-based knowledge of the FHSC.

1. This research study has identified that junior academic middle managers' multiple identities cause conflict between their professional and academic roles, negatively affecting their habitus during periods of organisational change.

2. This research has demonstrated that utilising a collaborative approach to staff development, such as co-operative inquiry, is beneficial for the development of habitus, and enables the accumulation of social and cultural capital in the social field, whilst also providing a supportive and collegiate environment for the junior academic middle managers to flourish and develop in their roles.

3. The findings suggest that junior academic middle managers need a period of time to transition when they move into a role in an organisation in which there are complex political reforms occurring, because these reforms affect the structure of the field and can cause hysteresis.

4. Utilisation of co-operative inquiry was beneficial to the junior academic middle managers. They found the safe and trusting environment of the CIG enabled them to learn-in-action, and this enhanced their problem-solving and decision-making skills and increased their confidence.

5. The junior academic middle managers developed a heightened reflexive approach when undertaking their role in the newly structured organisation. Bourdieu's key concepts aided their understanding of the complexity of professional education in HE and could be adopted as 'thinking tools' in the future.

5.8.2 Impact

Impact is considered vital for any research study, and the following five areas are considered to be the specific benefits and impact of this research study.

1. The CIG appears to have fostered a safe environment in which the junior academic middle managers learnt in action and built a confident reflexive

approach to their everyday practice. The junior academic middle managers continue to act as facilitators in the planning and implementation of staff development days; this co-production with staff promotes engagement and ownership. As a result, action learning and world café events are integrated into staff development days and provide ongoing opportunities to promote a positive action-in-learning culture.

2. Two former CIG members have successfully defended their doctoral vivas and have since influenced changes in academic mentorship induction and an enhanced communication strategy. Both allow the FHSC to have a proactive but considered market orientated approach to future business priorities. An action learning strategy has been implemented in the case University following one junior academic middle manager conducting research utilising Bourdieu's key concepts.

3. The action learning format has allowed new academics to develop a culture of action learning, accumulate capital and understand the 'rules of the game'. The evaluation outlined in Appendix 5 demonstrates actions to be taken in the future. These changes complement HR policies and provide opportunities to increase engagement between HR, HoDs and junior academic middle managers, which ultimately have the potential to enhance the working lives of all FHSC staff. The impact of the CIG could be seen as providing novice researchers with a forum for supportive critical reflection, thereby building their confidence to be agents of change, whilst developing modes one and two knowledge.

4. I have presented at a national conference (Evers & Haydock, 2019). The presentation was well received and led to a debate about policy change and the impact on practice. Delegates were keen to gain a better understanding of Bourdieu's key concepts in order to explore the negative impact of changes in practice and how to mitigate this through student support. The presentation facilitated conversations with regard to the interplay between professional

identity and facilitating change when social policy reforms directly impact on practice.

5. There were a variety of second-order outcomes that affected the FHSC during the lifetime of this research study; these are evidenced in Table 5. These changes were not directly linked to the research aim and outcomes. The actions were taken by the CIG and these unintended outcomes, or second-order outcomes, have been influenced by the junior academic middle managers throughout the lifetime of this study and continue to be part of everyday practice.

Table 5: Second-order outcomes

Issues identified by CIG during the study	Actions	Impact
Difficulty in transitioning from professional practice into HE	Development of a mentorship policy Development and implementation of a new staff induction programme to aid understanding and transition Formalised mentorship arrangements for new academics Action learning sets for new academics	Changes to staff induction for academic new starters. Successful completion of one CIG member's professional doctorate. Academic mentors have volunteered for the opportunity to support new academic staff. This responsibility is now considered to be a staff development opportunity, and consequently the role has accrued value. The role has dedicated time allocated to it and changes have been made to the workload model. It is now a recognised role and is included in the FHSC policy in conjunction with the HR probationary policy. Implementation of a new academic action learning group, which has been well evaluated by new academic starters. (Appendix 5)
Changes in HE priorities, new ways of working, administrators and academics involved in the changes	Staff day evaluation and changes implemented	Implementation of a new format for staff days. Responsibility delegated to junior academic middle managers and FHSC staff to plan staff days to facilitate co-production of their development needs and provide opportunities for knowledge sharing and giving a voice to the FHSC staff.

Issues identified by CIG during the study	Actions	Impact
	Enhanced use of technology and improvement in assessment processes, implementation of Turnitin for grade marking	The only Faculty in the case University to fully implement Turnitin for assignment assessment and marking. This has reduced staff waiting time for assignments to be delivered due to the multi-sited nature of the FHSC. Ultimately it has enhanced the student experience as students have immediate access to annotated feedback without travel to the University.
	Introduction of electronic diaries and standardisation of out-of-office and email contact details. Successful completion of one CIG member's professional doctorate (Collins, 2019).	Improved access to electronic diaries has enhanced transparency, and improved communication for staff to arrange meetings and manage staff workload, particularly during sickness and absence. This study made recommendations to promote and enhance communication and knowledge sharing with students, stakeholders and colleagues.
Academic and administrative staff reported feeling disconnected, and wanted a voice and ongoing development and support	Following the staff day evaluations, the junior academic middle managers implemented administrator and academic world café events on staff days	This enabled a more collegiate environment for knowledge sharing, understanding roles and has influenced organisational behaviour and climate. The events were well attended and reported to be valued by staff and gave them a safe place to have a collective voice.
	Discussions with HR and the FHSC senior management team	The development with HR of a new career structure for administrative staff, which provides different roles and supports more opportunities for development and working closely with academic staff on research, bids and projects.

5.8.3 Recommendations for further research

This study, proposes the following recommendations:

1. Further research should be undertaken cross HEI with a wider interprofessional group of middle managers including academics and administrators because this study mainly comprised of nurses and midwives in a single FHSC.

2. Research that uses a co-operative inquiry method with post-doctorate academic staff would be beneficial to understand their development needs and provide an informal network to support their transition.

3. Conducting further co-operative inquiry studies, which incorporate the theoretical key concepts of Bourdieu while the landscape is continually changing and evolving, would encourage managers and other staff to work together on specific problems requiring change. For example, it would be beneficial to replicate this study with academic staff who are qualified professionals and have been socialised into their profession by undertaking a degree programme rather than an apprenticeship style training programme.

5.9 Limitations of research study

Co-operative inquiry does not seek to be generalizable, therefore, there is no claim that the findings of this study are generalisable. Nevertheless, it is hoped that the findings will add to the existing body of knowledge of junior academic middle managers in professional education. It is acknowledged that a limitation of this study is that it is a small-scale research study in a post-1992 HEI in the North West of England and mainly comprised of nurses and midwives in a single FHSC. A limitation of the CIG was lack of engagement with some CIG members. In the future I would ensure roles and responsibilities were clarified and assigned at the beginning of the study.

5.10 Conclusion

Having completed the research study, I believe that co-operative inquiry is a suitable method to explore staff development needs in professional education in a HE

context. Bourdieu's theory of practice has enabled me to deconstruct and reconstruct practice, research and education in my own organisation. As a consequence, it has enabled me to make recommendations for future research and staff development needs that integrate professional practice. Throughout the lifetime of this study the FHSC has developed a robust strategy for ongoing staff development that encompasses mode two knowledge and embraces tacit knowledge. I hope that this research has contributed to these positive changes.

As I complete this thesis, I am mindful of the complexity of being an insider researcher, and the privileged position I have as a HoD. I am fortunate as this is not the end of my research journey. I will continue to contribute to the research culture in my own organisation and support future practitioners. I believe throughout this study, I have accumulated capital and in doing so I have enhanced my habitus and contributed to the staff development needs in the case FHSC. As I write this conclusion, I have received an invitation from a Professor in the FHSC to participate in research to develop an understanding of the post-doctorate environment in the case FHSC. It is exciting to be included in this work to promote the development of novice researchers in the future, and it reinforces my belief that I have accumulated the symbolic capital to be accepted and valued in the field of research.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Consent form

Consent Form

Title of Project:

To explore the effects of organisational change on academic staff; a co-operative inquiry to uncover staff development needs

Name of Researcher: Jean Mannix

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the participant information sheet, dated ……., for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions. ☐

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason and my employment or rights being affected. ☐

3. I understand that I will be also invited to give feedback through the collaborative inquiry group (CIG) meetings. ☐

4. I agree to take part in the above study. ☐

_____	_____	_____
Name of Participant	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Name of Person taking consent (if different from researcher)	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Researcher	Date	Signature

Appendix 2: Participant information sheet

Participant information sheet
Date:……..

To explore the effects of organisational change on academic staff; a cooperative inquiry to uncover staff development needs

This research study is being undertaken in order to fulfil the requirements for the Doctor of Professional Studies and is supported and funded by The University of Chester. It has received ethical approval through the Faculty of Health and Social Care Research Ethics Sub-Committee.

This project has been developed following reconfiguration of the Faculty of Health and Social Care, which has created considerable organisational change and will require staff development and cultural change. Following the reconfiguration four new roles have been developed, in the form of Faculty coordinators. These roles are in addition to the six Deputy Head roles, there have also been variations within the Head and Deputy Head of department roles and responsibilities which have been aligned to the faculty strategic direction, University core objectives and the practice partner's key priorities.

I would like to invite you to take part in this research study. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask if there is anything that you are not clear about or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

What is the purpose of the study?

The project will use a participative action research approach to identify staff development needs particularly in relation to leadership, innovation and enterprise.

I would like to undertake this research to explore your perceptions and development needs for your role within the Faculty of Health and Social Care. The aim is to use this information to advise the current and future staff development needs. To achieve this I am proposing, a cooperative inquiry approach, as a collaborative inquiry group (CIG), we would meet regularly with the other Deputy Heads/Faculty Co-ordinators.

Why have I been chosen?

You have been chosen because you have recently been appointed as a Faculty coordinator or Deputy Head of Department as part of the new reconfiguration of the Faculty.

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part in all or part of the project. If you decide to take part in the collaborative inquiry group (CIG) you will asked to sign a consent form. However, you are still free to withdraw from any part of the project at any time without giving a reason. Your decision to withdraw or not take part will not reflect on your current or future roles in any way. If you decide to take part you may wish to retain this information sheet for your records.

What will happen to me if I take part?

If you decide to take part, you will be contacted and invited to become part of a CIG and attend monthly meetings to explore how you perceive your role in the faculty. It is anticipated that this information will be used to inform a staff development programme to help shape the academic role(s) of staff within the faculty.

When you are invited to the CIG meetings, you and up to 10 other members of the faculty will have the opportunity to raise and discuss your perceptions and experiences relating to your role within the Faculty. The meeting will be led by me as principal investigator. The meetings will last approximately two hours during the working day. The meetings will be audio taped and transcribed so that the data can be fully analysed. The tapes will be confidential and only shared with members of

the CIG. No-one individual will be identifiable in any reports or publications developed from this research.

An action plan will be sent out to the CIG to gain feedback on the findings from the meetings. The report will be shared through the CIG meeting and there will be an opportunity for you to provide feedback.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

If you choose not to participate your views may not be represented in the development of a faculty strategy.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

By taking part, you will be contributing to the development of the faculty vision for developing leaders within innovation and enterprise. By sharing your views, it will hopefully benefit you and your colleagues in the future.

What if something goes wrong?

If you wish to complain or have any concerns about any aspect of the way you have been approached or treated during the course of this study, please contact:

Professor xxxxx Chair, Faculty Research Ethics Sub- Committee
Room xxxx Telephone xxxxx

Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?

All information which is collected about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential and only the CIG will have access to such information. The final report/thesis will include your feedback, but no part of the report/thesis will be attributed to any single member of staff from the Faculty. Data will be managed in accordance to the University of Chester Guidelines on retention and storage of research data. https://ganymede.chester.ac.uk/index.php?page_id=1488138&group=14

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The results will be written up into a report/thesis and shared with the Faculty Management Group. All of the feedback will be anonymised so no individual will be able to be identified.

The findings may also be included in published journal articles. Individuals who participate will not be identified in any subsequent report or publication. The data will not be used for any other purpose.

Who is organising and funding the research?

This research is initiated by the principal investigator as part of my Professional Doctorate studies and it is not receiving any funding. This project is supported by the Dean of Faculty and will form part of the faculty staff development programme.

Who may I contact for further information?

If you would like more information about the research before you decide whether or not you would be willing to take part, please speak with the principal investigator

Jean Mannix

Email

Thank you for your interest in this project.

Appendix 3: Literature search strategy

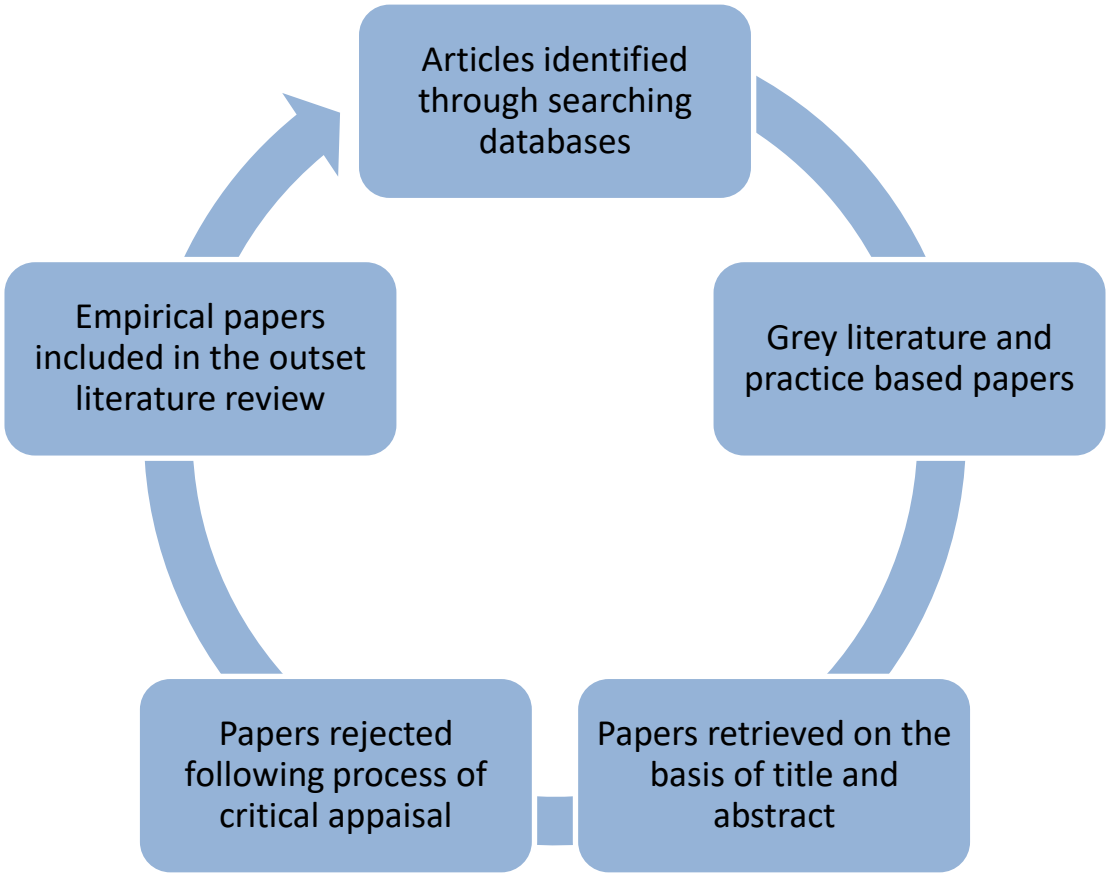
Search strategy

Electronic databases searched	Keywords	Boolean operators
Business Source Elite, British Education Index, CINAHL (Cumulative Index of Nursing and Allied Health Literature), Blackwell Synergy and Science Direct	staff development, 'staff training', ' Junior Academic Middle Managers', in combination with, 'higher education' 'nursing 'and 'professional roles'.	'and' and 'or'

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria
1990-2018 Primary peer reviewed research Government reports UK University reports Unpublished Dissertations/Theses Internal practice-based data
Exclusion criteria
Literature that does not meet the inclusion criteria

Appendix 4: Selection process utilising CASP



Appendix 5: Academic action learning group evaluation

The first group took place and of the 20 members invited eight attended the initial session. The sessions were held monthly and the group determined that xxx would be the main venue as this was the easiest venue for members to get to.

Terms of reference and ground rules were agreed and it was decided that the first hour for each group would be an action learning session where members could bring any concerns, examples of good practice and any pedagogical questions. The second hour would take a more structured approach with a pre agreed topic being presented to the group. Topics were requested by the members of the group or they evolved out of the previous concerns/discussions raised. Members were also asked to email the facilitator with any topics they would like to be addressed. This rarely occurred which may be indicative of their level of understanding with regards to the role of the lecturer when they first commenced in post.

Numbers of attendees have varied over the year, reasons for non-attendance were frequently recorded as teaching clashes despite differing days and timings offered. Numbers at the sessions ranged from 11 to 2 members. It is worth noting that the numbers decreased over time which may be an indication that staff were becoming more confident in their role, they felt supported by their individual mentors or their workload commitments increased as they moved through their probationary period making attendance difficult.

Examples of Formalised Topic areas discussed

- Module leader responsibilities
- Marking and assessment strategies/deferrals and extensions
- Personal pedagogy frameworks
- Research into transition into HEI
- Pre-registration nursing Deputy Programme Leader role and remit.
- Disability services
- Student support
- Practice governance and assessment
- PAT roles and responsibilities
- Module assessment attendance significance
- The academic assessment cycle.

Examples of the issues discussed in the open forum session and the action taken by the facilitator as a result:

Issues raised	Action
Differences in mentorship experience, ranging from good to poor	Raised with Associate Dean and new mentorship policy developed and implemented
Concerns and lack of understanding of Module leader responsibilities	Roles and responsibility flow charts developed
Workload pressures and difficulty transitioning into the HEI	Discussed with Associate Dean and new mentorship process to include support re transition and workload priorities
Marking concerns for new starters	Double marking process to be embedded across all departments
Managing classroom behaviour and student expectations	Behaviour expectations to be included in the programme documents. Communication strategy document developed.
BLS and mandatory training	Concerns taken back to Director for Pre-registration nursing
Difficulties managing competing demands	Formalised session on key priorities in academic year
PATs	Formalised session arranged
Practice module coordination	Concerns taken back to Director of Pre-registration
Opportunity for progression and development	Advised to discuss this as part of the PDRP process and also with the HOD
Concerns re not teaching their subject specialism/area	Advised to discuss with their DHOD/HOD

Member evaluations

Although no formal member evaluation has taken place yet, verbal feedback has been very positive. Members frequently commented on the supportive nature of the group and the value of knowledge -sharing in a safe trusting environment. Members also felt more connected to other new starters working across the Faculty.

Further actions for HoDs and junior academic middle managers as a result of the group discussions

The development of roles and responsibility flowcharts

The development of a communication strategy for staff and students

The development of a Mentorship process document

The Identification of named mentors from each HoD to develop a robust and affective mentorship strategy and action in learning culture.